The University of Chicago

ARCHITECTURE OF NORTHWEST PERSIA UNDER THE ĪL-KHĀN MONGOLS

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ART
1939

By
OTIS ELLERY TAYLOR

Private Edition, Distributed by
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARIES
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
1940

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PREFACE

Ruin and widespread desolation are most often associated with the Mongol invasion of Persia. These hordes of Asiatic barbarians, early in the thirteenth century, swept down upon the Seljuq civilization leaving little after their destructive massacres that attested to the highly developed culture which the Seljuqs had produced. Then a period of exhaustion followed, during which the Mongols, now in complete control of the country, gradually changed their nomadic existence to a sedentary and urban manner of life. Trade and industry developed for which buildings in their cities were needed. Trade was now possible from the Mediterranean to the Yellow Sea and the improving security in the exchange of goods created a certain accumulation of wealth which made building on a large scale possible.

After the destruction of Baghdād in 1258 (656 H.), Hulagu returned to Northwest Persia to establish his capital at Maragha, his favorite seat of residence. Gradually the Mongol ideas of government were fused with those of Persian feudalism developed for so many preceding generations. Their Shamanistic religious practices were replaced by the Muslim creed which was later adopted as the official religion. Thus, the way was paved for the cultural and intellectual renaissance which, under Ghazan Khan, 1294-1303 (694-703 H.), reached its highest point. A new and splendid epoch in the history of Persia opened in which the primitive energy of the invaders developed the refined and mature culture of the Īl-Khān period in Īrān.

The historical background for the architectural renaissance in Northwest Persia during the rule of the Īl-Khān Mongols, together with a discussion and reconstruction as far as possible of the most important monuments is the purpose of this work. Such a study has been needed. To this end, all possible references to the buildings made by historians and travellers of the period as well as those of later times, have been studied and collected so as to determine as far as possible the appearance of the buildings, many of which today, due to wars and earthquakes, are in ruins. Documents of the period in the state archives in

Rome, Milan, Genoa and Venice, and in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, have been searched for any references which might throw light upon these buildings.

The transliteration of the Arabic and Persian words used here is the same as in the Survey of Persian Art (Oxford, 1939).

The writer is indebted to M. Bahrami for his assistance in translating from Arabic and Persian manuscripts, material otherwise not available to him. Acknowledgment must be made also of M. Minovi's fresh translation of the Rāshīd ad-dīn letter describing the appearance of Rashidiya in the fourteenth century. Arthur Upham Pope's suggestions, criticisms and encouragement have made the completion of this work possible. My appreciation and thanks to him are of the fullest.

Plate I

Northwest Persia at the Time of the Īl-Khān Mongols (Fourteenth Century).

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*The Contents given here is for the complete dissertation, which is in the University of Chicago Libraries. The complete Contents is included for convenience of persons who may wish to know more of the buildings of Northwest Persia.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Geography, Topography, and Economic Geography

Adharbayjān, the northwest province of Iran, consists of a high plateau surrounded by snow-capped mountains.[1] The boundaries of the province are natural: on the north, the Aras or Araxes River separates Adharbayjān from Adharbayjān in Russia and Armenia: to the west is a series of difficult and confused mountain ranges between Adharbayjān, Turkey in Asia and Mesopotamia, and another range of high mountains runs eastward from Ardabīl, part of which parallels the coast. Only to the south do the plains of Iran roll up to Adharbayjān where the Qizil-Uzan River is the natural boundary of the province of Khamsa to the south. The area of the province is about forty thousand square miles. The highest elevations are Mt. Sahand, south of Tabrīz, about twelve thousand feet high; Mt. Savalan, west of Ardabīl, thirteen thousand feet and the lesser Mt. Ararat near the Armenian border, thirteen thousand feet. The two tumultuous rivers, Araxes and the Qizil-Uzan which in its lower course is called the Sifid, are the only ones of importance. Both flow into the Caspian Sea.[2]

Twenty miles west of Tabrīz, the most important city, lies Lake Urmiya, the largest body of water in Iran. It is eighty miles long and twenty-five miles at its widest. Too salty for animal life, its shores are among the most fertile of the province.

In early times under the Caliphate[3] two main roads passed through Adharbayjān from south to north--the road from Baghdād through Hamādan and Sisar, branching at Barzah, the left road going through Urmiya, east of Lake Urmiya, through Salmas and Khuy to Nakhichevan and Dabil, the capital of Armenia, the right

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[1] Lionel W. Lyde, The Continent of Asia (London, 1933), p. 335.

[2] "Adharbaidjān," Encyclopaedia of Islam, I (Leyden and London, 1913), 134.

[3] G. Le Strange, The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate (Cambridge, 1930), pp. 10, 229-31; Lyde, op. cit., p. 335.

branch touching Marāgha and on to Tabrīz, Marand and Khuy; the second road from Isfāhān, Tehrān and Qazvin through Zinjan, where it branched to the left leading to Miana and Tabrīz; the right fork to Ardabīl, Bajarvan, Bardhaah, and Tiflis. A third road starting from Ardabīl passed through Tabrīz and Khuy, skirted Lake Van, passed through Sivas and on to Turkey in Europe. Adharbayjān was thus the frontier province through which western travelers, usually in pursuit of trade, were introduced to Iran, either from south European countries by road, or from Russia and north European countries by the Caspian Sea.

Adharbayjān, a very fertile, agricultural province was from the earliest times famed for its gardens and orchards. Dried fruit was one of its chief exports, together with lead, copper, sulphur, orpiment, and lignite. Its variegated, translucent marble had a constant market. Groves of poplar trees grew in the river valleys as they do today. Near the Caspian Sea the shore was heavily wooded. Wood at all periods has been in demand.[1]

Tabrīz, the principal city of Adharbayjān, is situated on an alluvial plain, at an altitude of five thousand feet, its summers hot and its winters cold. Earthquakes are frequent, which accounts for the destruction of much of its best architecture.[2] Its location was determined by the trade routes passing through it, the only suitable paths between the mountains to the north and the plains to the south. Thus it was predestined to be of great importance in the transit trade between Turkey and Russia to Tehrān, Isfāhān, and the south. Until recent times with its population of over two hundred thousand it was one of the largest, most important cities between Istanbūl and India, comparable to Baghdād, Isfāhān, Tehrān, and Tiflis. Other important cities of the province were Marāgha, Marand, Ardabīl, and Miana.

As a prehistoric center Adharbayjān is now considered as the common source of a culture which spread to Susa, Anau and India. In the last phase of the Stone Age at the end of the fifth millennium B.C. it had a highly developed civilization. From ornaments, buttons, seals and a highly developed painted pottery found in recent excavations at these sites similar char-

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[1] P. Vidal de la Blache et L. Gallois, "Géographie Universelle," Asie Occidentale par René Blanchard (Paris, 1929), Vol.VIII.

[2] "Tabrīz," Encyclopaedia of Islam, IV (1934), 583.

acteristics have been noted which strongly suggest this common origin on the plateau of Northwest Iran.[1]

Adharbayjān was in ancient times a part of the vast Median province which was contained in the Achaemenid Empire. After Alexander's conquest, an independent satrapy was formed under the name of Atropatene, which may be the origin of the word Adharbayjān now used for the province. Takht-i-Sulayman was then the capital. During Sāsānian times the province was known as Adhurbadhaghan.[2] In the rule of Abbassid caliphs, Adharbayjān with Ardābil as the capital, was a part of their possessions. The real importance of the province in modern times began after the Mongols conquered it in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. At Marāgha, Hūlāgū established his capital which the Il-Khans later moved to Tabrīz,[3] the city these Mongol rulers developed and beautified. It continued to be an important center through the rule of the Safavids, down to the present day.

The boundaries of Adharbayjān in the fourteenth century were: to the east, the provinces of Mughan and Gīlān touching the Caspian Sea; to the west, the countries of the Caucausus, including Armenia; to the north, the province of Arran; to the southeast, the province of Jībal, the ancient Media; and to the southwest, the province of Jazirah, Ancient Assyria.[4] Today the province is almost as extensive as in Mongol times.

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[1]Ernst Herzfeld and Sir Arthur Keith, "Iran as a Prehistoric Center," Survey of Persian Art (Oxford, 1938), I, 42-58.

[2]"Adharbaidjān," Encyclopaedia of Islam, I, 134.

[3]"Marāgha," Encyclopaedia of Islam, III (Leyden, 1936), 265; Hamd-Allah Mustawfi of Qazwin, The Geographical Part of the Nuzhat al Qulūb, trans. G. Le Strange ("Gibb Memorial Series"; III [London, 1919]), 78.

[4]Le Strange, op. cit., Map, facing p. 87.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Mongols were originally tribes which wandered from the Gobi desert in the south of Asia to Lake Baikal in the north. Breeding cattle and horses and raiding were their principal means of livelihood. Allegiance they owed to the Chin dynasty of China. They were brave, hardy and ruthless, their archery and horsemanship being renowned. About 1160 (556 H.), Temujin was born, who was later to lead these Mongol hordes in waves of destruction westward across the plains of Asia. He succeeded to the leadership of his tribe at thirteen. Because of his great physique and his organizing ability, he soon subdued other tribes and added greatly to his power. By 1206 (603 H.), he headed a confederation of these nomadic tribes and changed his name to Chingiz Khan.

While he was gaining strength in North Asia, the Seljuq[1] rulers in Persia were, on the other hand, losing their power. By the end of the twelfth century, the Khwarazm rulers, a Turkish people, had gained control of the Seljuq empire. Sultan Muhammad (1200-1229) (597-617 H.), ruled over Afghanistan, Iraq, Fars and Adharbayjān with Samarkand as his capital. He had most ambitious plans to create an even greater empire and was on his way to Baghdād to take over the Caliphate when the coming of the Mongols made his return imperative.

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[1]The Seljuqs were descendants of a Turkish chief, Seljuq ibn Yakah, who served in the army of one of the Khans of Turkestan. These Nomads wandered to Bukhara, were converted to Islam, and eventually were numerous and strong enough to conquer Khurasan from the Ghaznavid dynasty, then all powerful at Ghazna. Their first victories in Khurasan were at Merv and Nishapur. Their leader, Tughril Beg, then crossed Iran capturing Hamadan, Rayy and Isfahan as he marched to Baghdad where he was proclaimed Sultan by the Caliph in 1055 (477 H.). For twenty years all of western Asia, from Afghanistan to the Asia Minor frontiers of the Greek Empire, was united under the Seljuq rule. After the death of Malik Shah, in 1072 (465 H.), their power began to wane. Various branches of the reigning family became almost independent in different parts of the vast empire. In Khurasan, their rule continued until the death of Sanjar, in 1157 (552 H.). Then the Shahs of Khwarizm took over the ruling power until the Mongols appeared under Chinghiz Khan soon after the beginning of the thirteenth century.

In 1219 (616 H.), the Mongols started westward, captured Bukhara which they sacked and burned, and pressed on to Samarkand which offered no resistance, hoping thus to be spared the fate of Bukhara. The inhabitants here, however, were also massacred, and the country around laid waste. Nothing escaped the appalling destruction of these Mongol tribes.

Balkh was the next city to be plundered and all its people put to death. Other cities were sacked, burned or flooded by diverting the courses of the rivers. Merv was destroyed in 1221 (618 H.). Four hundred artists, however, were spared and sent back to Mongolia. The destruction of Nishapur, Rayy and Hamadan followed. Sultan Muhammad fled in terror to an island in the Caspian where he died soon afterwards.

The first wave of invasion ended when Chingiz Khan, in 1223 (620 H.) returned to Mongolia. Muhammad's son, Jalal-ad-din, attempted to re-organize Iran but while opposing a second wave of Mongol destruction was killed at Isfahan in 1231 (628 H.).

The third wave of Mongols broke in 1232 (629 H.). All resistance now was completely overcome. Tales of terror so frightened the inhabitants of cities and towns that upon the approach of the Mongols the inhabitants surrendered without raising a hand to defend their property or themselves. Sacking and destruction continued for twenty years.

The destruction by the Mongol hordes was enormous. Wherever they appeared complete ruin followed. Ibn al Athir, writing at the time, said: "We pray to God that He will send to Islam and to the Muslims some one who can protect them for they are the victims of the most terrible calamity, the men killed, their goods pillaged, their children carried off, their wives reduced to slavery or put to death, the country in fact laid waste."[1] Al Juveni reported that in the country traversed by the Mongols only a thousandth part of the population remained and where there were previously one hundred thousand inhabitants but a hundred remained. "If nothing interferes with the growth of population in Khurasan and Iraq Ajeim from now to the day of the resurrection," he adds, "it will not be one tenth of what it was

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[1] B. C. d'Ohsson, Histoire des Mongols depuis Tcninguiz-Khan jusqu'à Timour Bey ou Tamerlane (Amsterdam, 1852), III, 469-470.

before the conquest."[1]

In 1254 (652 H.), Hūlāgū, grandson of Chingiz Khan, was sent at the age of thirty-five to Persia to crush near Qazvin the powerful Ismail'i sect called the Assassins. In 1256 (654 H.), after their castles had been destroyed, Hūlāgū invaded Iraq and in 1258 (656 H.) captured Baghdād, looted the city and killed eight hundred thousand people. The Caliph Al Musta'sin and all his line were put to death. Hūlāgū pressed on to Syria and captured Aleppo, but before pushing on to Egypt as he had planned, returned suddenly to Mongolia because of the death of his brother, Mangu, the ruling Khan.

Upon his return to Persia in 1261 (660 H.), Hūlāgū incorporated all the areas through which he had passed into vassal states and ruling in the name of the Great Khan, Kublai, he assumed the title of Īl-Khān (provincial Khan) to show the homage he owed and acknowledged in a loose sort of way, to the supreme Khan in Mongolia. This title of Īl-Khān passed on to his successors and became the designation of this dynasty which ruled Northwest Persia for over a hundred years. The center of wealth and influence now shifted westward from Khurasan where it had been established for many centuries. Marāgha, Tabrīz and Sultaniya were in turn the official capitals where the Il-Khans re-organized the government, encouraged trade and industry and initiated the architectural activity which gave to Persia some of her finest monuments.

The cities of the province of Adharbayjān did not, however, all have the same history. Tabrīz, Ardabīl and Marāgha, in turn shared in the triumphs and in the destructions of the time.

"It is the province of disturbance and of wars," wrote Yāqūt, the author of Al-Mu'djam ul Buldan, in the thirteenth century, "and it is for these reasons that most of the cities are . . . . in ruins."[2]

Successive earthquakes of exceptional destructive force also added to the ruin of the cities and buildings in addition to

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[1] Ibid., I, 351.

[2] Yāqūt, Geographisches Wörterbuch (edition Wüstenfeld: Leipzig, 1866, 1870), I, 875.

tn wrought by foreign invaders.[1]

When Tabrīz was founded is not known. Possibly a settlement existed here in Median times. Adharbayjān was then remote, for it lay off the usual commercial routes through the province of Jībal. In the first quarter of the third century A.D. a Sāsānian town was built by Khusraw but as only one literary reference to this fact is known it cannot be taken as final.[2] When the Arabs came to Īrān about 642 (c.21 H.) Ardabīl is mentioned but not Tabrīz. Hamd Allah of Qazvin, writing in 1340 (741 H.) mentions the tradition that Tabrīz was founded by Zubayda, wife of Hārūn ar Rashīd, but this tradition has never been verified.[3] Early in the ninth century, Tabrīz was destroyed by an earthquake but was soon rebuilt.[4] In the tenth century it was ruled by the Sājids, lords of Adharbayjān. Ibn Hawqal reports that during this time it was a prosperous trading center.[5] In the twelfth century under the Atabag Qizil Arslan, Tabrīz became officially the capital of Adharbayjān. The Mongols attacked the city in 1220 and 1222 (617-619 H.) but both times were persuaded by gifts of money to leave it unharmed. Finally in 1230 (628 H.) Tabrīz surrendered to the Mongols. In 1264 (663 H.) it became the official capital of Abāqā and under Ghāzān Khān, who came in 1295 (695 H.), it reached its greatest splendor.[6]

But Ardabīl, during the whole of the Middle Ages, was of supreme importance in the province, located as it was on the principal roads which crossed the southwestern part of Irān.[7] Almost all merchandise of Adharbayjān which went to the provinces of Rayy or Khurāsān first passed through Ardabīl. At the time of Ibn Hawqal (about 978 [368 H.]) the amount of merchandise annually in transit through Ardabīl equalled one million dirhams (about

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[1] "Tabrīz," Encyclopaedia of Islam, IV, 583.

[2] J. Muyldermans, Étude de Critique, textuelle et litteraire, Vartan Le Grand. Extraite de l'Histoire Universelle (Louvain, 1927), p. 85.

[3] Hamd-Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 78. [4] Ibid.

[5] Ibn Hawqal, Viae et Regna ("Bibl. Geogr. Arab.," I [Leyden, 1870]), 89. (Arabic Text.)

[6] "Tabriz," Encyclopaedia of Islam, IV, 585-86.

[7] Hamd-Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 173; Le Strange, op. cit., pp. 229-31.

Plate II

Photo--Taylor

View of Tabrīz--1935

$300,000).[1] At this time, Tabrīz was renowned for the amount of gold it possessed.[2]

Ardabīl, according to Yāqūt,[3] existed in Sāsānian times, but it was not until the Umayyad caliphs made it an administrative center that it became well known.[4] The Mongols sacked and destroyed it in 1220 (617 H.)[5] Later the Safavid rulers made it their capital for a time because the Shaikh Ishak Safi al-din whom they regarded as the founder of their dynasty was buried here about 1335 (714 H.).[6]

Marāgha lies fifty miles east of Tabrīz in a direct line. Probably a settlement existed here during Roman days but it was not until the Muslim period that it became important. The Dailamis in the tenth century and the Seljuqs after 1054 (446 H.) ruled the city. The Mongols captured it in 1230 (628 H.), when Hūlāgū made it his capital, built an observatory near-by, and stored the treasures captured from Syria and Baghdād on an island in Lake Urmiya. Later, in 1295 (695 H.) when Ghāzān Khān made Tabrīz the Īl-Khān capital, it declined in importance.[7]

The Īl-Khān Mongols cannot be credited with initiating on their arrival all the artistic activities of Adharbayjān. The province had such ancient and well established cultural traditions that long after the Islamic conquest it retained its local dialect known as Adhari.[8]

As late as 1046 (438 H.) Nasir-e-Khusraw reproached the poet, Katran, because Katran did not speak Persian as well as he.[9]

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[1]Ibn Hawqal, Viae et Regna ("Bibl. Geog. Arab.," II [Leyden, 1873]), 252. (French text.)

[2]Muqaddasi, Descriptio Imperii Moslemici ("Bibl. Geog. Arab.," III [Leyden, 1876-1877]), 378.

[3]Yāqūt, "Al Mudjam Ul Buldan," op. cit., I, 197.

[4]"Ardabīl," Encyclopaedia of Islam, I, 426.

[5]Le Strange, op. cit., p. 168.

[6]S. Lane-Poole, The Mohammadan Dynasties (Paris, 1925), p. 255.

[7]"Marāgha," Encyclopaedia of Islam, III (1936), 261-266.

[8]Ahmed Keswari è Tabrizi, Adhari ya Zaban è Bastan è Adharbayagan (Teheran, 1926 [1304 H.]), p. 58. (Persian text.)

[9]Nasir-e-Khusraw, Zafar-Nāma, Relation du Voyage (edition Schefer; Paris, 1881), p. 6.

Under the Seljuqs, Tabrīz attained considerable importance. As early as 1043 (453 H.) Abu Mansur Wahsudhan ibn Muhammad Ar-Rawwadi al-Azdi, after the very destructive earthquake of October 5, 1042 (14 Safar 434 H.), began at once the rebuilding of the palaces destroyed and of a new city wall six thousand paces in circumference.[1] Three years afterwards, Nasir-e-Khusraw estimated the extent of the city walls as fourteen thousand paces. Later, the Governor of Tabrīz offered seven thousand dinars of pure gold (ibriz) to the Sultan Tughrul I, 1132 (526 H.), to induce him to return to Tabrīz and settle there.[2] Hence, at this time Tabrīz may be considered as the political center of Adharbayjān more than a few years earlier, when the marriage of this same Sultan Tughril I with the daughter of the Caliph took place in Baghdād and when Tabrīz was for a short time regarded as an important center by the Muslims.[3]

When Hamadān became the capital of the Seljūqs, the large cities of Adharbayjān were more frequently visited by the princes of this dynasty and more closely related politically than before. Tughril I, the brother of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna, subjugated Tabrīz, and settled there, where he devoted himself to literary pursuits. Ardabīl, however, was the capital.[4] Soon afterwards, Kara Sunkur assumed power and dared to demand of Sultan Ghiyath-al-Din Masud the head of his vazir, 1140 (533 H.). But Kara Sunkur's reign was short and after the conquests of Ildigiz his name was forgotten.

Several rulers of the Ildigiz dynasty contributed to the prosperity of the province. Their interest in the intellectual life of the country is shown by their patronage of the poets

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[1]This earthquake was the terrible one which Nasir-e-Khusraw mentioned, the recollection of which was still very clear in his mind at the time he wrote. The astronomer Abu Tahir è Chirazi had predicted it. "His prediction came true, for the city, in the very night he had indicated, was completely ruined and some 40,000 men were killed in the disaster." Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 79; Yāqūt, op. cit., I, 822; IV, 476.

[2]M. Th. Houtsma, Receuil de Textes Relatifs à l'Histoire des Seldjucides, II (Paris, 1889), 163. (Persian text.)

[3]Rahat-us-Sudur wa Ayat-us-Surur, by Muhammad ibn' Ali ibn Sulayman ar-Rawandi, ed. Muhammad Iqbal ("E.J.W. Gibb Memorial--New Series," II [London, 1921]), 111. (Persian text.)

[4]Ibn Athir, Kitab al Kamel fit Tarikh (Leyden, 1851), XI, 52.

Nizāmī and Khaqani.[1]

The name of Atabag Muzaffar-al-din Uzbeg (1210-1225) (607-622 H.) was renowned because of the achievements of his Vazir, Kaj Abulkasim Rabid ud-din Harun ibn Ali ibn Zafar dindan, whose learning was so great that Djelal ed-Din Mankobirti founded his historical dissertation upon it.[2] Sa'd ud din Waravini[3] tells us of the efforts made by Kaj Rabid ud din to add to the spiritual culture of his contemporaries. His special contribution was the founding of a large library on the ruins of older ones, "for in this same locality (Tabrīz), at an earlier date, libraries had been founded, nothing of which exists today except the names."[4]

He gave orders that in this library, every kind of book "referring to the various branches of learning" was to be included, and "he chose ten calligraphers whose annual income was assured by the State, to spend their entire time copying manuscripts." These books included "works on the Arabic language, both grammars and rhetorics; on religion, on dialectics, commentaries on the Quran and on its religious traditions or interpretation known as the Hadith, medical works, astronomical treatises, religious and political histories as well as the anthologies and Diwans of verse, prose and proverbs, brought from all parts of Syria and Irak, for this purpose, to the number of two thousand. In addition, several Qurans were to be copied, all written in a calligraphy, one more beautiful than the other, and ornamented with miniatures."[5]

Sa'd ud din himself, by the order of the Vazir, translated into Persian the Marzuban Nameh from its original Pahlavi text.[6]

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[1]The great romantic poet of Īrān, Nizāmī, lived under the protection and patronage of Sultan Qizil Arslan of the Ildigiz Dynasty who ruled over the southern part of Adharbayjān from the capital at Marāgha; E. G. Browne, A Literary History of Persia (Cambridge, 1928), II, 401-402.

[2]Mohammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ali al Nasawi, Histoire du Sultan Djelal ed-din Mankobirti, ed. O. Houdas (Leyden, 1895), pp. 14-16. (French text.)

[3]Waravi, the name of a small village in the mountains between Ardabīl and Tabrīz.

[4]The Marzuban Nameh, ed. Mohammad Kazwini ("Gibb Memorial Series," VIII [London, 1909]), 298. (Persian text.)

[5]Ibid., pp. 299-300. [6]Ibid., Preface and p. 297.

The Bibliothèque Nationale possesses a manuscript of Quran commentaries prepared by Mohammad ibn Djarir al Tabari and translated into Persian during the reign of Mansur ibn Nuh ibn Nasir, the Samanid ruler, 960-976 (350-366 H.), which between 1210 and 1225 (607-622 H.) was copied for this library at Tabrīz.[1] This manuscript is written in fine Naskhi script of the thirteenth century. Pages 5B and 6A are illuminated, the decoration consisting of scrolls of leaves and flowers which cut across the writing.[2]

Rabid ud din, in 1225 (622 H.), at the time of the conquest of Tabrīz by Jalal al din, Shah of Khwarazm was taken prisoner and the city delivered to pillage. The booty seized was hidden in the fortress of Ruin-Dez, not far from Tabrīz.[3] Thus before the Il-Khans came into power, Tabrīz was "the real backbone of the country because of its productions, which attracted people from all over the world."[4]

Īrān, in the second half of the thirteenth century, was under the domination of the Īl-Khāns who acknowledged the authority of the supreme Khān, Mangu in Mongolia. Hūlāgū, in 1255 (653 H.), conquered the principal cities of northwest Īrān on his way to Baghdād which he took in 1258 (656 H.). Returning from Baghdād to Hamadān, Hūlāgū in 1258 (656 H.) ordered a vast treasure house to be built on the shores of Lake Urmiya[5] for the valuable objects captured in his campaigns against the Assassins near Qazvin, and in his wars in Asia Minor, Georgia, Armenia, Luristan, Kurdistan, and Baghdād. These treasures included gold, rich stuffs and cloths from Greece, Egypt, and China; Arabian horses, rare

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[1]Manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1610.

[2]E. Blochet, Les Enluminares des Manuscrits Orientaux, Turqs, Arabes, Persans, de la Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris, 1926), p. 138 and Plate XCVII.

[3]The exact location of this fortress ("que personne ne pouvait y rentrer une fois ses portes sont fermées") (Ibn Athir, op. cit., XII, 322) is not known today. Minorsky, in his article on Maragha, (Encyclopaedia of Islam, III, 264), in which he locates this fortress, is not in agreement with Yāqūt, the author of the Mu'djam ul Buldan (edition Wüstenfeld, I, 173). Probably it was about halfway between Tabrīz and Marāgha.

[4]Ibn Athir, op. cit., XI, 328.

[5]M. Quatremère, Histoire des Mongols de la Perse, I (Paris, 1836), 317-19.

mules, Greek, Alanic and Qipchaq boys; Turkish, Chinese and Berber slave girls.[1]

The Mongols were now in control of all the country from the Oxus to the Tigris rivers, but Hūlāgū determined to include Mesopotamia and Syria in his conquest, both of which had been under the rule of princes of the Ayyubid dynasty recently displaced in Egypt by the Mamlūks. Syria as far as Damascus was forced to acknowledge the rule of Hūlāgū but the strong defense of the Egyptians under Baibars prevented the Mongols from taking more of their kingdom.

In 1230 (628 H.) the Mongols descended upon Tabrīz. The inhabitants, to show homage, offered the chief robes made of Khatai, a sort of Chinese stuff, and of khoi (textiles manufactured at Khuy) and atabi. The skill of these textile workmen seems to have pleased the Malik, or ruler, of the Mongols (Djurmaghun-noir), for he gave the command "to call these workmen so that more cloth of this type worthy of royalty could be manufactured, and also to make a tent for him, more luxurious than any ever made before." It was covered on the outside with patterned silk (atlas) enriched with gold (zarkash) and lined with fur.[2]

The invasion of Iran by the Mongols brought new influences to the art and civilization of the Persians. The new rulers had their own language, a different manner of thought, strange customs and the ways of a Far Eastern civilization. It was not difficult, however, for the Iranians to adjust themselves to the changed conditions, for some years before they had faced a similar problem with the coming of Islam and the consequent changes in their language due to their Arabic speaking conquerors. These varied influences seemed only to emphasize and enrich the Iranian elements and to carry forward their artistic development with added vigor.

Moreover, the Mongol tongue was already known to a few learned men. With the accession of Abāqā, 1265 (663 H.), new coins were minted at the capital, Tabrīz, which bore inscriptions in the Mongol script,[3] and some of the coins of Arghun bore the

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[1]Hammer-Purgstall, Geschichte Wassaf's (Wien, 1856), I, 73-74.

[2]Ibn Athir, op. cit., XI, 329.

[3]Several coins of this time bore the inscription KHAGANU AREBARI ABAKA DHAN DELED KEGULUDSEN, "This is the money of Abāqā

same inscription.[1]

A very important document of this period is a letter from Arghūn Khān to Philippe le Bel, King of France, written in Uighur characters in the Mongol language, the official language of the court of the early Īl-Khāns.[2] When Ghāzan Khān ordered Rāshīd ad-dīn to write a history of the world, the Iranian compilers worked together with learned Chinese of whom the most eminent was Poulad Tchingzaig.[3] Though many Mongol phrases are found in the literature of the period, the Mongol tongue did not take the place of Arabic as Arabic had earlier replaced Pahlavi. In the end, the Mongols used Persian, and their literature took on more and more of the Persian character. During the rule of Ghāzan Khān especially, Mongol culture with this important Iranian influence flourished, and an artistic style was developed, much of which had its roots in the Seljuq dynasty which preceded it. The poet Shams ud Din è Kashani used the measure of the Tagharub tongue in his history of the Mongols, thus paying a compliment to the Mongol rulers.[4]

These Mongol conquerors, even though they adopted many of the customs of the Iranians whom they ruled, did not wholly give up their earlier traditions and customs, as the accounts of certain travellers such as Ibn Battūtā[5] or historians such as the author of the Masalik ul Absar wa Mamlik ul Amsar[6] record. Just how much these Mongol elements contributed to the Īl-Khān dynasty's cultural development is difficult to evaluate. One of the

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Khan, the Great and the Precious." Catalogue of Oriental Coins of the British Museum (London, 1881), VI, 19-21, Plate II.

[1]Ibid., p. 283.

[2]Abel Remusat, Histoire et Mèmoires de l'Institut Royal de France, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, VII (Paris, 1824), pp. 363 ff.

[3]Preface to the History of Rāshīd ad-dīn, Manuscript in Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1113, fol. 3 B.

[4]Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1443, fol. 3.

[5]C. Defremery and Dr. B. R. Sanguinetti, Voyages d'Ibn Batoutah (Paris, 1854), II, 125-130.

[6]Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds arabe 2325, fol. 76-81.

important considerations in Mongol life was the tent in which they passed most of their time, while hunting or at war. The tents of the rulers were always large, and decorated as elaborately as possible. Hūlāgū used a tent for his coronation ceremonies and received the tribal chiefs of his army in one which had a thousand poles and was made entirely of patterned silk (zarkash); so large and so luxurious was this tent[1] that it was given the special name of Khargah. This love of luxury was an essential quality of the Mongol character and typical of their ideas and standards.

Similarly, the conventions used in miniature painting of this period are enriched by the addition of new types of headdresses. Some for men have plumes; some for women are stepped up in small stages. The walls of the tents are now decorated; luxurious carpets cover the ground, and the wooden doors and panels are carved and gilded.

With the capture and destruction of Baghdād by the Mongols in 1258 (656 H.) not only the Abbāsid Caliphate was destroyed but the dominating political influence of the Muhammadan religion as well. Hūlāgū, although he tolerated Islam, was himself a Buddhist and built several Buddhist temples at Khuy.[2] He was also sympathetic to the spread of the Nestorian creed throughout Central Asia. Born a Christian, Hūlāgū was considered by the Armenians as "the torch and protector of their religion" in his opposition to the Muhammadan creed.[3] He showed partiality to the Christians because of his wife, Dokuz-Khatun, granddaughter of the priest, Jean. This princess, adds the author of the Jami at-Tavarīkh who was born in the Christian faith, always protected her fellow believers.[4] A fervent believer in Christianity, she demanded that her husband build numerous churches in all the provinces of his empire so that wherever she happened to be she might in her tent hear the sound of church bells. Hūlāgū's successor, Abāqā,

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[1]Jami at-Tavarīkh, Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 209, fol. 275 b.

[2]Ibid., fol. 294 b.

[3]R. Grousset, Histoire de l'Asie (Paris, 1922), III, 102. Ed. Dulaurier, "Les Mongols d'après les historiens arméniens," Extraits de l'histoire universelle de Vartan, Journal Asiatique, XVI (5 Series, 1860), 290?

[4]M. Quatremère, op. cit., p. 95.

was also a Buddhist, but he failed to protect the Nestorians of Asia Minor against the attacks of the Mamlūk ruler of Egypt, Baibars, who took them as prisoners.[1] Abāqā, following the example of his father, took a Christian for his wife, Marie, the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor, Michael Palèologue, and thus continued the relations of the Nestorians with the Mongol rulers. Whether Abāqā was baptized a Christian at the time of the marriage is uncertain.

For two years, 1282-84 (681-3 H.), under the reign of Ahmad, who succeeded his brother, Abāqā, the Muslims gained ascendancy, for he announced his conversion to Islam, promised protection to the Muslims, converted many churches into mosques and did all he could to facilitate their pilgrimages to Mecca.[2]

At Ahmad's death in 1284 (683 H.) Arghūn was elected to succeed him. He was tolerant of all religions, seemed favorably inclined towards Christianity and was sympathetic to Buddhism as shown by the honor with which he regarded the ashes of certain saintly persons brought to him at Tabrīz where he was staying in the spring of 1288 (687 H.)[3]

With the death of the historian Alaiiud din Juveni with most of his family, the new Īl-Khān ruler showed his hostility to the Muslims, who had been protected by his brother Ahmad. He forbade Muslims in any branch of the finance administration of the Empire because of their intrigue and gave these offices only to Christians or to Jews.[4] Then it happened that the office of the Vazir was given to a Jew, S'ad ud Dawlè, a great opponent of Islam, who proceeded to place his brother, Fakhrud Dawle, in charge of finances in Arabian Irak; Sharus ud Dawle at Diarbekr; his cousin Abu Mansur Mohezib ed Dawle at Tabrīz and Lebid, son of Abi-rabi in Adharbayjān.[5] Thus the Vazir strengthened his

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[1] H. H. Howorth, "The Mongols of Persia," History of the Mongols (London, 1888), Part III, pp. 242-45; 249-50; D'Ohsson, op. cit., pp. 469-70.

[2] Howorth, op. cit., pp. 286-288; D'Ohsson, op. cit., pp. 553-54.

[3] Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, Geschichte der Ilchane (Darmstadt, 1842-1843), I, 373.

[4] Howorth, op. cit., p. 332.

[5] D'Ohsson, op.cit., IV, pp. 33-34.

position through his appointments--all Jewish--while the Sultan, Arghūn, took less and less interest in the affairs of his government as he became more and more absorbed in his interest in alchemy.

In a letter dated May 18, 1285 (684 H.), addressed to Pope Honorius IV, in Rome, Arghūn writes of his good will towards the Christians and sends valuable robes and incense as an evidence of his support of the Catholic faith.[1]

In 1288 (687 H.), a new diplomatic representative arrived in Rome, the Uighur monk, Barsauma, who was received by Pope Nicholas IV. Arghūn through him again gave assurances of his friendly attitude towards the Christians of his Empire and promised protection to all Nestorian or Franciscan missionaries who might be sent to his people.[2]

In 1289 (688 H.), a Genoese, Buscarel de Gisulf was sent by Arghūn to Rome to present a letter to Pope Nicholas IV saying that Arghūn was prepared to send aid for the Crusades. The Pope, in turn, sent Buscarel to Edward I, of England, asking him to treat the envoy honorably and to give due attention to what he had to propose.[3] Buscarel, as mentioned above, carried a letter to Philippe de Bel, which is still preserved in the diplomatic archives in Paris. Arghūn in this letter writes that he is ready to take part in the Crusades, on the side of the Christians against the Egyptian Moslems, and that his sister, when she became the wife of the King of Georgia, became a convert to Christianity.[4]

Pope Nicholas IV, on his part taking advantage of this opportunity to spread Christianity, sent his blessing to Uruk Khatum, the mother of Khorbande (later to be known as Öljaitü), for having adhered to the faith and spread it among her immediate circle. Her son had been baptized in the Catholic faith and given the name of Nicholas, which he used until his mother's death.

On March 10, 1291 (691 H.), Arghūn died and was buried in

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[1]Abel Remusat, op. cit., pp. 355-57. [2]Ibid., pp. 359-60.

[3]Ibid., pp. 362-64; d'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 70-71; Howorth, op. cit., III, 354; T. Hudson Turner, Archaeological Journal, VII (London, 1850), 48-49.

[4]Abel Remusat, op. cit., pp. 430-432.

[5]Ibid., pp. 383-84, 389.

the mountains south of Sultaniya.[1]

For four years, 1291-1295 (690-694 H.), Gaykhatu, Arghūn's brother, and Baidu, cousin of Gaykhatu, reigned, the former favoring the Muslims, the latter the Christians. Finally, in 1295 (695 H.), Ghāzān had Baidu seized at Nakhichevan and killed, whereupon he became ruler.

Because of these relations with the various parts of the world, the province of Adharbayjān and especially its capital Tabrīz became a cosmopolitan center. On one hand, the culture of the Far East, and on the other, the influence of the Occident, were impressed upon the traditions of this northwest part of Īrān. This admixture of distant cultures and dissimilar influences was one of the most important factors in the development of the Īl-Khān power and splendor--influences which must always be borne in mind when any aspects of the art of this period are considered. The new complexion given to the development of the artistic life of this period is due to these foreign and widely separated streams of culture.

During the Abbāsid caliphate, Baghdād was the center of the spiritual and artistic life of Islam. It was, however, very near to Ctesiphon, the earlier Sāsānian capital, so that the Iranian influence must have been an important factor in Muslim life. Indeed, Sāsānian contributions to Islam in the early Islamic period were much greater than those which they received from Islam.

After the fall of Baghdād, the Īl-Khāns centered their activities in Northwest Iran so that Tabrīz became the great clearing house for trade of all kinds from the Occident and the Far East.

Hitherto the trade routes most used were to and from the Gulf of Persia, dominated by Siraf.[2] Later, other ports replaced Siraf but the Persian Gulf ports never lost their importance even in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when the products of the Far East passed through them on their way to the markets at Tabrīz and Sultaniya.[3]

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[1]D'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 58-59.

[2]Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 116; "Siraf," Encyclopaedia of Islam, IV (1934), 444.

[3]Clavijo, Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403-1406 (London, 1928), pp. 160-61.

Now the trade routes across Armenia to the Black Sea and Trebizond became important. A regular service of boats on the Caspian Sea was maintained by the Genoese, who according to Marco Polo had obtained the monopoly of this area.[1] Venetian merchants such as Pietro Vigleoni, settled permanently in Tabrīz. In Trebizond the Venetians had a part of the city to themselves. In Tabrīz all foreign articles were freely traded, in contrast to the regulations in the bazaars at Baghdād during the Abbāsid caliphate, when certain articles, the use of which was prohibited by Islam, were confiscated. The Il-Khāns accepted readily any articles which were of Christian origin, as shown by Arghūn's action in 1285 (684 H.), when in the presence of twelve bishops of the Nestorian church he ordered Stephen the Orphelan to pitch and to consecrate the tent church which had been sent him by the Pope. Arghūn with his own hand dressed himself in his pontifical gifts. Holding the wooden rattle which served as a bell, the Īl-Khān himself made the round of the camp and compelled everyone to receive the benediction.[2] Thus the Īl-Khāns by their religious toleration made it possible for European merchants to live and trade in their empire.

In 1266 (665 H.), two merchants from Marseilles arrived with a letter of introduction and recommendation from Charles of Anjou to stimulate the trade relations between France and Iran.[3] Later the Genoese made an arrangement with Arghūn relative to the opening of a port in the Gulf of Persia where their ships on the way to India could call.[4] Christian interpreters such as Johannes de Bonachia, Ugo Gantelini, Petrus de Molina, Gerardus Casmuri, were at the court of the Īl-Khāns.[5]

But gradually the anti-Islamic feeling of the earlier Il-Khans was overcome by the growing sentiment in favor of the

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[1]W. Heyd, Histoire du Commerce du Levant au Moyen Age (Leipzig, 1886), II, 111.

[2]Stephannos Orbelian, Histoire de la Siounie, Traduite de l'armenien par M. Brosset, Premiere Livraison (St. Petersburg, 1864), p. 266.

[3]Del Giudici, Codex dipl. di Carlo d'Angio (Rome, 1530), I, 219-20.

[4]Heyd, op. cit., II, 111.

[5]J. L. Mosheim, Historia Tartarorum Ecclesiastica (Helmstadt, 1741), p. 76.

Iranians and their adopted religion. With Ghāzān Khān, the first ruler to be converted wholeheartedly to this faith, the Islamic domination was assured, for he at once became a most zealous believer.[1]

Born in 1271 (670 H.), Ghāzān when still a youth was appointed by his father governor of Khorosan, and at twenty-four assumed supreme control. Brought up a Buddhist, he had a Buddhist temple built at Khabushan, but his conversion to Islam gave a great impulse to the Muslim teachings.[2] The turban was introduced as the court headdress.[3] Thus the Mongol Empire was now to be organized on the basis of Muslim culture and as orders were issued to destroy all temples with idols, all churches, synagogues and fire towers, to kill all Buddhist priests and treat the clergy with contempt, Christian influence waned rapidly. When Ghāzān embraced Islam, he definitely broke off his allegiance to the Supreme Khan in Mongolia.[4]

Ghāzān Khān brought to his reign the first signs of strong central authority since Hūlāgū and Abāqā, the rulers in the intervening years being mostly weak and decrepit. Now a new evidence of power appeared. Rāshīd ad-dīn, the court physician and Vazir, was the official recorder of Ghāzān Khān's reign and it is to his book, the Jami at-Tavarikh, that we are indebted for much of the knowledge of the Mongol dynasty.[5] He tells us that Ghāzān was his own administrator, the financial condition of the country improved and prosperity increased as the people were freed from oppression and extortion. He brooked no opposition from his officials, even putting to death his general, Nuruz, to whom he owed

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[1]Howorth, op. cit., III, 384.

[2]Ibid., pp. 384-97; Quatremère, op. cit., pp. 194 ff.

[3]D'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, pp. 196-97; Howorth, op. cit., III, 396, 421, 427.

[4]Howorth, op. cit., pp. 396, 486.

[5]Rāshīd ad-dīn was a physician, statesman and philanthropist as well as a historian. His great history of the Mongols including a section on general history was written during the first quarter of the fourteenth century. This history has unfortunately never been fully published. The first part which includes events in the life of Hūlāgū Khān was brought out by M. Quatremere in Paris in 1836 in a French translation with an excellent preface and valuable notes under the title, Histoire des Mongols de la Perse, écrite en persan par Raschid-eldin, publiée, traduite en

his throne.

Ghāzān's knowledge was wide and varied. He held the arts and sciences in high esteem and realized their importance to the state. Rāshīd ad-dīn credits much of the information in his book to Ghāzān and admired Ghāzān's grasp of natural history including botany, medicine, astronomy, and chemistry. As to trades he says: "There was no art of handicraft, such as those of the smith, carpenter, painter, founder, turner or others at which he (Ghāzān) did not work with his own hands better than artisans themselves, and he often directed them himself."[1] In 1304 (704 H.), at the age of thirty-three, after a reign of nine years, he died. Burial took place at Shanb Ghāzān near Tabrīz, the settlement he had built.

The markets at Tabrīz during Ghāzān's reign were open to European merchants and the number of caravanserais for their use along the roads was increased. He further gave orders that on each milepost a tariff should be posted called Tablets of Justice of the State, on which the exact amount of State taxes was to be inscribed.[2] He also founded a new city called Ghazāniya on the outskirts of Tabrīz where the travellers and merchants could be housed. "It was built on the site of Shanb," wrote Rāshīd ad-dīn, "on a site larger than the area of Tabrīz," and "Ghāzān ordered that the merchants from Asia Minor (Rum) or from Europe (Afrandi) should be taken there and their merchandise unloaded at the particular gate where their type of wares was sold. A large caravanserai, four bazaars, baths, buildings for the display of the goods that were brought and stables were built not far from each gate."[3] Here was the real market or bazaar of Tabrīz, revenues from which were pooled, for the Tamghadji, controller of the revenues of commerce, was the same for both Tabrīz and Ghazāniya.

In the center of the town was a religious foundation called Abwab ul Ber, which contained among other buildings a Khanekah (monastery) where the travellers were lodged and fed without charge.[4] Ibn Batutta who was thus provided for without

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francais accompagnée de notes et d'un Mémoire sur la vie et les ouvrages de l'auteur.

[1]Howorth, op. cit., III, 492.

[2]Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1113, fol. 209.

[3]Ibid., fol. 256. [4]Jami at-Tavarīkh, fol. 258.

cost wrote, "The ruler gave me lodgings in this monastery, located between the two streams which brought water from a distance in the midst of clumps of trees. Lodgers there were given meals consisting of bread, meat and rice, to which butter and sugar had been added."[1] Sultaniya, two hundred and fifty miles south of Tabrīz, was founded, not to compete commercially with Tabrīz but to provide another market where the products of Tabrīz could be sold and so increase its sales, especially during the months of June, July and August.

At Larjan, the chief town of the district of Laristan, at the foot of the mountains of Damavand, a summer palace was built called Arghūn's Kiosk which retained its name for some time for the Zafar Nameh so refers to it.[2]

Öljaitü, brother of Ghāzān, succeeded to the throne in 1304 (704 H.), at the age of twenty-four. He ruled for the next twelve years. His mother was a Christian so he was baptized in that faith but later as his wife was a Muslim he accepted Islam.[3] He continued to wage war upon the Mamlūks of Egypt, sending envoys to Pope Clement V, and to Edward II, of England, offering his assistance, as had his predecessors.[4] In 1305 (705 H.), upon the birth of his son Abu Said, Öljaitü made Sultaniya his capital[5] and enlarged the city which his father, Arghūn, had founded. The country prospered due to the continuation of the policies of Ghāzān Khān and the guidance of Rāshīd ad-dīn, the Vazir. Öljaitü, first embraced the Hanafi sect of the Sunnites but after a visit to the tomb of Alī in Iraq became a Shiite.[6]

Öljaitü held in high esteem the poet Hemem i Tabrizi of whom he said, "Our bond is comparable to that which exists between body and the soul."[7] Öljaitü was unusually learned in

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[1] Defrémery and Sanguinetti, op. cit., p. 129.

[2] Howorth, op. cit., I, 389-91; Quatremere, op. cit., p.203.

[3] Howorth, op. cit., III, 535,557.

[4] D'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 591-93; Howorth, op. cit., III, 575.

[5] Howorth, op. cit., III, 555.

[6] Howorth, op. cit., III, 557, 559.

[7] Heman's reply to this compliment was: "It is the same as the sun of happiness which lights the world of my existence." Manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1531, fol. 17 b.

religious affairs for he could discuss with such authorities as Sheikh Jamal ud din Malhar or with Nizam ud din Abdul Malik, the finer points of their philosophy.[1] This same ruler ordered that his son Abu Sa'id should be sent for instruction to the most famous calligrapher of that time, Seyed Sharaf ud dir è Shirazi. A little later, Öljaitü showed a sample of his son's writing to his courtiers, with much pride, so proficient had he become.[2]

Öljaitü's reign was that of a virtuous and liberal ruler. He died in 1316 (716 H.), at the age of thirty-three.

Abu Said when only thirteen succeeded his father Öljaitü. In 1323 (723 H.), the long war with Egypt ended and invaders from South Russia and Central Asia were repulsed. The empire enjoyed continued peace and prosperity until, as a result of court intrigue in 1318 (718 H.), Rāshīd ad-dīn was executed by order of Abu Said.[3] Ali Shah, who was then appointed Vazir, failed to keep the affairs of the country in the same order as Rāshīd ad-dīn and was finally replaced by Ghiath ad-din, son of Rāshīd ad-dīn.[4] Dissatisfaction in the army caused unrest throughout the Empire and at Abu Said's death in 1335 (736 H.), the power of the Īl-Khāns in Īrān virtually collapsed.[5]

As there was no direct heir, various minor descendants called Jalayrs[6] ruled until the capture of Tabrīz by Timur in 1384 (786 H.). But Timur did not remain long. After capturing Sultaniya he returned to Samarqand. Then in 1385 (787 H.), Toktemesh-Khan of the Golden Horde plundered Tabrīz, followed by Timur's second invasion in 1386 (788 H.) when he camped at Shanb Ghāzān and levied a large indemnity. It was not until 1392 (792 H.), when Timur gave Miran Shah, his son, control over the provinces of Adharbayjān, Rayy, Gīlān, Shirvan, Darbad and lands of Asia Minor that Tabrīz came under the direct control of the

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[1]Nafayes ul Fonun fi'arayes el oyon; Manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1058, fol. 301. This manuscript is more complete than the original which was later used for the edition of this work in Tehran.

[2]Matla us Sa'dein wa Madjma'ul Bahrein. Manuscript Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Supplément Persan, 1772, fol. 6 B.

[3]Quatremere, op. cit., p. xliii. [4]Ibid., p. xlvii.

[5]D'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 599-717; von Hammer, op. cit., II, 252-309; Howorth, op. cit., III, 586-628.

[6]S. Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 246-48.

Timurids. The following year Miran Shah apparently went insane, for he began to destroy many of the fine buildings of historic interest in and around Tabrīz and killed many of the inhabitants. Timur returned in 1399 (802 H.) to punish all who assisted at this calamitous destruction but too late to save most of the important monuments built earlier in the century.[1]

Of the European travellers to Persia in the Mongol period one of the first is John of Monte Corvino who, returning to Italy in 1289 (688 H.), reported to the Pope his hopes of converting the heathen of Western Asia especially Arghūn Khān.[2] He writes first from Tabrīz when he reports that both the Franciscans and Dominicans had establishments but as he travelled on to India and China, fails to give further details.[3]

Ricold of Monte Croce, about this same time, writes of oil wells and salt mountains on his way to Tabrīz, where he preached in Arabic, and expresses his indignation at seeing the church of St. John here turned into a Quran school.[4]

Earlier friar travellers in the thirteenth century to the Mongol courts on the Volga and the Orkhon were John De Plano Carpini, William de Rubruquis and Andrew de Longumeau, but none of them touched Persia on their outward or return journeys.[5]

The Polos, Nicolo and Maffeo with Marco, son of Nicolo, in their two journeys to China from 1260 to 1295 (659-695 H.), were the earliest known commercial representatives of the western world to make their way across Asia. They described each country they passed through including Persia but as their travels are so well known they will not be discussed here.[6]

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[1] "Persia," Encyclopaedia of Islam, III, 1045.

[2] L. Wadding, Annales Minorum Seu Trium Ordinum (Rome, 1733), V, 195-98, 199-203; d'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 69-70.

[3] Wadding, op. cit., VI, 69.

[4] Archives de l'Orient Latin, 1884, II, 258-96. Vatican Mss. #3717, fol. 249 A - 267 A.

[5] Hakluyt Series, Voyage of Johannes de Piano Carpini, 1246, pp. 134-178; Journal of Friar William de Rubruquis 1253 ("Extra Series"; Glasgow, 1903), I, 229-93.

[6] Henry Yule, The Book of Sir Marco Polo, The Venetian (2 vols,; London, 1871); G. Pauthier, Le Livre de Marco Polo redigé en francais sous sa dictée en 1298 par Rustisier de Pisa (2 vols.; Paris, 1865).

The Christian missions were pressed with great vigor and adroitness, but after some fifty years of effort and hardship coupled at times with brilliant success, they ended in almost complete collapse due to the wholehearted conversion of Ghāzān Khān to Islam and its official recognition as the state religion. With this religious intercourse there was ample commercial and diplomatic reciprocity for under the earlier Īl-Khān rulers there was little hindrance from bigotry, ecclesiastical or commercial. The vast extent of the Mongol rule from the north of the Himalayas, the Hindu Kush to the Arabian desert made possible in a manner not known before, the peaceful exchange of goods and ideas from end to end of Asia.

The Catholic Church, however, continued in the fourteenth century to wage religious war with the Mongols, for a Metropolitan See was created at Sultaniya in 1318 (718 H.) and the Dominican friar, Francis of Perugia, was appointed to this bishopric at this new capital of the Īl-Khāns.[1] In 1330 (731 H.), Pope John XXII appointed John de Cora Archbishop of Sultaniya. This archbishop probably wrote the Livre de l'état du Grant Caan which was written between 1328 and 1334 (729-735 H.). Nothing on the art of northwest Persia, however, appeared in his work.[2]

Odoric of Pordenone, a Franciscan friar from near Venice, who travelled to China between 1318 and 1330 (718-731 H.), has left a valuable record of his observations and travel, one that compares favorably with the accounts of the Polos. He writes of "Thauris [Tabrīz] as the greatest of all commercial towns having correspondence with the whole world for merchandise and yielding a larger revenue than all France according to the testimony of Christians who here formed a numerous colony." His next stop was at Soldania (Sultaniya) ten days journey beyond, which he describes as cool and the summer residence of the kings. From there he went on to China where he became bishop of Peking.[3]

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[1]Raynaldus, Annales Ecclesiastici, Rome, 1240. Dated from Avignon, May 1, 1318, and addressed to Franco Perusino, O. F. P. electo Soltaniensi.

[2]Jacquet, Journal Asiatique (Paris, 1830), VI, 57-71.

[3]H. Cordier, Les Voyages en Asie au XIV Siècle du bienheureux frère Odoric de Pordenone (Paris, 1891), pp. 19-24.

After the death of Abu Said, the last true Īl-Khān, the attempts of the Catholic Church to proselyte among the Mongols seem to have been of little avail as they lost touch with those in power in Persia. In the Timurid period the domination of Islam appears to have been complete and the Middle East to have closed its doors to Christianity as completely as had the Far East. Now European travellers came to Northwest Īrān for commercial and not for religious purposes.

III. INTRODUCTION TO ARCHITECTURAL DISCUSSION

According to the writers of the Jami-at-Tavarîkh, the earlier Mongol rulers and their ancestors started the construction of many buildings, but few were finished.[1] This statement is attested by the fact that almost no evidences have come down to us of buildings existing prior to the reign of Sultan Mahmud Ghāzān Khān, 1294-1303 (694-703 H.).

Historians of the time attributed this paucity of construction to lack of tested methods and inexperience in use of materials. There was a constant confusion during construction because of workmen and beasts, both of which had often to be replaced or made to work in a place to which they were not accustomed.[2] This confusion arose from the inexperience of the architects and artisans who after a period of some seventy years when building was at a standstill, were now called upon to plan and carry through great building operations.

The earlier Îl-Khāns had aided the building of Buddhist temples or Christian churches, but these were mostly destroyed or turned into mosques with the conversion to Islam of Ghāzān Khān.[3] Notable exceptions are certain Buddhist temples built by Hūlāgū at Khuy which were still highly venerated by the Chinese descendants who, according to the author of the Nuzhat al-Qulub,[4] still inhabited this district.

In spite of the wholesale destruction of vast areas of the country by the Mongol hordes, building was started again and interest in artictic and intellectual activities was also stimulated and increased. Ibn al-Alqami, Hūlāgū's vazir, had a library of ten thousand volumes.[5] Abāqā Khān encouraged literature and

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[1] Jami-at-Tavarikh, Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1561, fol. 27.

[2] Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1561, fol. 27 B.

[3] D'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 145-47.

[4] Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 86.

[5] H. H. Howorth, op. cit., p. 137.

science.[1] Jami, one of the greatest poets of Persia, produced his works during most of the Mongol period.[2] Hūlāgū is reported to have said,"Thank God, I am both a world conqueror and a world preserver."[3] After his capture of Baghdād in 1258 (656 H.), Hūlāgū had a vast building constructed on the shore of Lake Riza-iya (Urmiya) to house the treasures captured in his campaigns and a tomb built where he was later buried.[4] He also ordered an observatory for the astronomer, Nasir al Din, of Tus, built at Marāgha,[5] traces of which can be seen today outside the city.

The Masjid-i-Jami at Riza-iya (formerly known as Urmiya) is one of the very few buildings existing today which was constructed before the period of great building activity under Ghāzān Khān. It has a stucco mihrab with an inscription dated 1277 (676 H.), showing it to have been of the period of Abāqā Khān, the successor of Hūlāgū. It is signed by the artist 'Abd al-Mumir ibn Sharaf Shah at-Tabrizi, one of the few names of artisans of the Mongol period which are known today.[6] Abāqā also repaired the ancient palace of the Sāsānian period, at Takht-i-Sulayman.[7]

Under Arghūn Khān 1291-1295 (690-694 H.), palaces were constructed at Mansuriya, Alatagh, Larjan and Baghcha-i-Arran which had not completely disappeared in the reign of Shah Rukh, 1404-1447 (807-850 H.)[8] Two towns called Arghunia and Sultaniya, later to be made important by Öljaitü, were founded.[9]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 219-21.

[2] E. G. Browne, A History of Persian Literature under Tartan Dominion (Cambridge, 1920), pp. 445-48.

[3] Howorth, op. cit., p. 137.

[4] Quatremère, op. cit., pp. 317-319.

[5] Ibid., pp. 324-25; Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 88; A. Houton Schindler, Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde (Berlin, 1883), XVIII, 338, Plate VIII for plan.

[6] J. Christy Wilson, The Masjid-i-Jami of Riza-iya, Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, V, No. 1 (1937), 38-42.

[7] Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 69.

[8] Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 209, fol. 294 b. This manuscript was a new transcription of the Jami at-Tavarikh made for Shah Rukh in 1433 (837 H.).

[9] Howorth, op. cit., p. 344.

Arghūn also built a Buddhist monastery on the walls of which his portrait and other pictures were painted but it was so poorly constructed that by 1295 (694 H.), when Ghāzān Khān came to power the mural paintings were being ruined by snow and rain.[1] Arghūn's mausoleum, a domed structure and chapel, was built by his daughter Uljay Khatun, where he was buried in the Sijas Mountains.[2] No traces of it, however, have been found up to the present time.

With the coming to power of the rulers Ghāzān Khān and Öljaitü, and their vazirs, Rāshīd ad-dīn and Ali-Shah, the architectural renaissance of northwest Persia received a renewed impetus. Some of the finest buildings ever constructed in Persia were brought into being in the fourteenth century. Only the gradual disintegration of the Īl-Khān power after the death of Abu Said in 1335 (736 H.), and the consequent incompetent administration of the state revenues ended a period of construction which might have continued much longer. The buildings which remain, however, enable us to characterize the period.

At the beginning of his reign Ghāzān Khān decided to regularize building construction so that intelligent methods of building would prevail in all parts of the country. He ordered a head supervisor appointed in each province where building was to be carried on, with whom were to be associated two assistants employed as secretaries. These officials were to be the originators of all projects and plans for building, were to have ample funds at their disposal and were ordered to send to the Central Diwan, or office, a complete report of all tools used and their condition at the time each report was made. All this equipment as well as timber, clay and iron were accordingly placed at the disposal of the Works Supervisor in each district. Instead of the workmen's being required to furnish their own tools as formerly, they were now supplied. Payment was made according to the degree of skill each workman commanded.[3] Under these conditions many of the buildings of Tabrīz and neighboring towns were constructed.

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[1] Howorth, op. cit., p. 398.

[2] Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 69.

[3] Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Jami-at-Tavarīkh, Supplément Persan, 1561, fol. 28-28 B.

New fortifications for Tabrīz were undertaken at the expense of Ghāzān Khān himself, who ordered that "the inhabitants must not build their houses in several stories" for the then unusual reason "that it is a bad custom, for streets are thus made narrow so that the air is affected, as in Khwārazm where epidemics such as cholera are spread."[1] Thus the principles of town planning were brought into being by the Mongols with a sense of the significance of architecture used for the public welfare.

Furthermore, Ghāzān Khān ordered a mosque and a public bath built in all the smaller cities and villages of the country. The revenues from the baths were to be used to keep up the mosques and to buy candles, carpets and incense for them.[2]

At this time he decided also to construct a domed building for use as his tomb at Shanb, two miles south of Tabrīz, the plan of which he himself marked out. In addition to the tomb, a large mosque was built, a palace known as Kushk-e-Adelye and a series of buildings including colleges, hotels, hospitals, orphanages, libraries, law court, public baths with swimming pools and an observatory in which was placed a round instrument which Ghāzān himself had devised to measure the distance of the sun from the earth.[3] Later, the plan of this city was copied by his brother, Öljaitü for the royal residence at Sultaniya.

This farsighted ruler, Ghāzān Khān, further decided to set aside a part of the state revenues each year for the maintenance of every building in the Abwab-al-Ber, as this ensemble of buildings at Shanb was called. Certain sums were set aside for furniture and carpets; for lighting, incense, cooking vessels, soup for morning and evening distribution, purchase and care of books, instruments for the observatory, salaries for professors of surgery and various kinds of welfare work.[4] In reality, it was not a suburb but a city which, under the name of Ghazāniya, almost eclipsed Tabrīz.

Rāshīd ad-dīn, the vazir of Ghāzān Khān, following the example of his master, built several buildings in Tabrīz, a dam across the river Āb-i-Sārā and in 1310 (710 H.), had a canal cut through the rocks, to bring water into the city from the Surkhāb mountains ten farsangs (fifty miles) away to the suburb which

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[1] Ibid., fol. 29. [2] Ibid., fol. 103 B.

[3] Ibid., fol. 8 B. [4] Ibid., fol. 32-32 B.

bore his name, Rashidiya.[1] Later his son, Ghiath ud-din Amir Muhammad added to it.[2] It was known also as Sharestan è Rāshīd ad-dīn, for so it was called by Abd ur Rashid Salih ibn Nuri al Bakubehi.[3]

Öljaitü gave to Rāshīd ad-dīn, who continued as vazir after the death of Ghāzān Khān, handsome presents in money and in land, of which Rāshīd ad-dīn said, "no sovereign had ever displayed towards one of his subjects such magnificent generosity."[4] In turn, Rāshīd ad-dīn used these gifts for religious purposes for it is recorded by the historian, Mirkhand, that Rāshīd ad-dīn set aside sixty thousand dinars (about $200,000) for copying, binding, drawings and parchment used in various religious books.[5]

After the death of Abu Said in 1335 (736 H.), the power of the Īl-Khāns declined rapidly. By 1345 (746 H.), building activity in Northwest Persia almost ceased. There was some building in other parts of the country--at Isfahan, Arbaquh, Shiraz, Yezd and Kirman, but no important buildings were written about nor have any remains come to light to show that after the middle of the century the renaissance initiated by Ghāzān Khān at the beginning of the fourteenth century, continued.

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[1]Abul Qasim 'Abdullah' Hamd Allah Mustawfi, ibn Abi, ibn Mohammad, ibn Abi Tahir al Kashani al Muvarrikh (hereafter referred to as al Kashani), History of Sultan Mohammad Öljaitü, Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1419, fol. 79. Quatremère, op. cit., Vols. I, XVII-XVIII.

[2]Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 80.

[3]Kitab Talkhis al Athār wa' adjayeb al mulk al Malik al Quhar. Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds arabe, 2224, fol. 39.

[4]Manuscript in Bibliothèque Nationale, Arabe 356, fol. 213 R.

[5]Manuscript in Bibliothèque Nationale, Persan d'Otter, 115, fol. 113.

VII. THE MAUSOLEUM OF SULTAN ÖLJAITÜ KHUDABANDA IN SULTANIYA

The desire of the Mongol Īl-Khāns to surpass their predecessors in the erection of monumental buildings reappears when Sultan Mohammed Öljaitü Khudabanda, the brother and successor of Ghāzān Khān, decided to make his capital in the Sahruyaz district, twenty-five miles southeast of Zanjan. His father, Arghūn, had in 1290 (689 H.), already laid out the plans for the walls of this town, which were to have a circumference of twelve thousand paces.[1]

The town lay six thousand feet above sea level. As a summer capital, Arghūn favored it because at this altitude the weather was cool. The hunting was good too, and the rich pasturage was excellent for grazing and breeding of horses. The Mongols first called the town Qunghurölöng, the prairie of the Alezans. This broad plain extends for several hundred miles sloping gradually up to the Keidar mountains in the distant horizon. This vast stretch of green meadow on all sides as far as the eye could see with a violet haze over the mountains was for me a most impressive sight in May, 1935, when I saw it for the first time. One realized Öljaitü chose this site for his capital because of its natural beauty, but as it lay off the principal trade routes he could not insure its continued existence.

"One day," records Rāshīd ad-dīn, "in the presence of important court officials, Öljaitü, referring to the wish of his father, ordered that construction of buildings for this town be started, the beauty of which would surpass all other cities in the world."[2] He renamed the town Sultaniya, meaning Imperial.

On July 24, 1305 (Muharram 705 H.) work was started on

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[1] Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 61; Yāqūt, Dictionnaire de la Perse, translated from Arabic into French by C. Barbier de Meynard (Paris, 1861); Hafiz-i-Abru, Chronique des Rois Mongols en Iran, texte persan édité et traduit par K. Bayani (Paris, 1936), p. 5.

[2] Jami at-Tavarīkh, Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 209, fol. 448. This manuscript was made by order of Shah Rukh in 1433 (837 H.).

the royal quarter of the town consisting of a fortress with thick walls, which were to be thirty thousand paces in circumference, but were not completed because of Öljaitü's death in 1316 (710 H.).[1]

The palace for the use of Öljaitü and those of his entourage, known as the Abwab-al-Ber (Gates of Piety), were enclosed in walls with sixteen towers.[2] Each side was five hundred paces in length. The wall of the citadel was of dressed stone and wide enough for four horsemen to ride abreast on it.

The general plan of the Abwab-al-Ber was almost identical with that of Shanb Ghazan near Tabrīz where, according to Al-Kashani, author of the history of Sultan Mohammad Öljaitü, one could see nineteen buildings around the tomb; a madrasa, a Khanaqah or hermitage, hotels, inns, a hospital and an administrative center.[3]

Rāshīd ad-dīn, Öljaitü's vazir, built a thousand houses here, a mosque with two minarets, a monastery, a college and a hospital.[4] Workmen were brought from all parts of the country to show their skill in building and merchants from Tabrīz came to make the city a center of trade and industry. Large sums of money were required for the salaries of the professors, the students and the doctors. At the time of Shah Rukh in the third quarter of the fifteenth century, remains of these buildings were still to be seen.[5]

Ali-Shāh, who shared with Rāshīd ad-dīn the office of vazir, also had fine residences constructed, better built and more beautiful than any previously erected. A cloth merchants' bazaar was also built. Öljaitü was very pleased with this display of Ali-Shāh's interest in the city for Öljaitü favored it more than any other in Adharbayjān.[6] In 1340 (740 H.) Hamd Allah Mustawfi, state accountant in the reign of Abu Said, wrote that

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[1] Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 61.

[2] Hafiz-i-Abru, op. cit., p. 61.

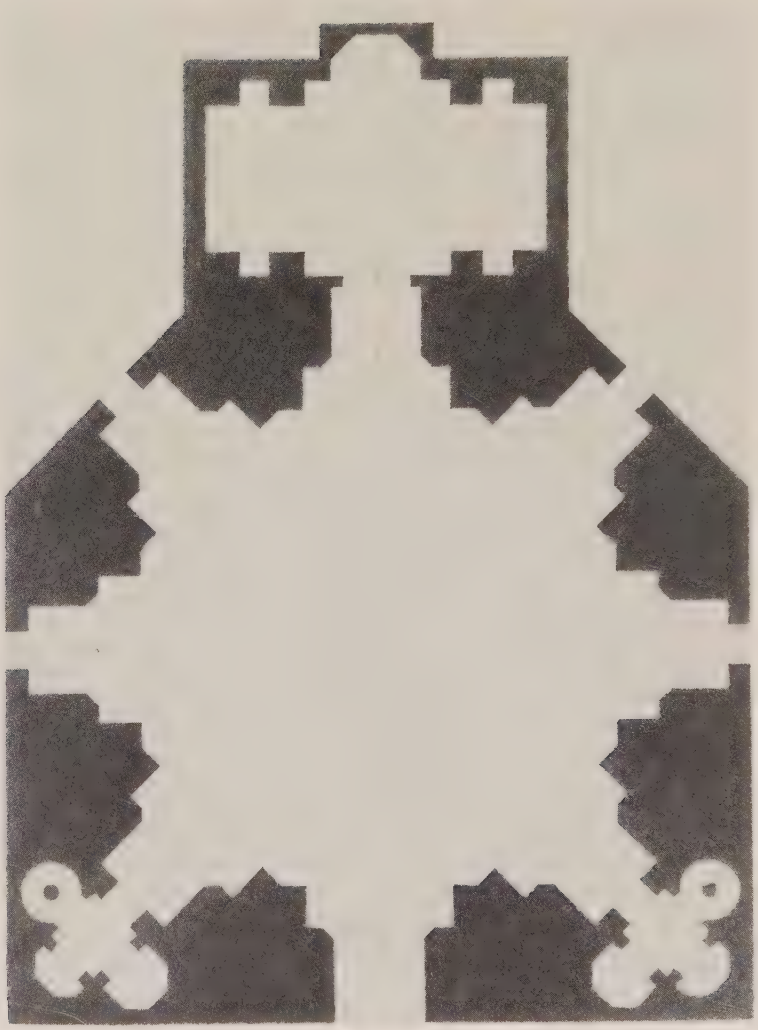
[3] Manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Supplément Persan, 1419, fol. 32.

[4] D'Ohsson, op. cit., IV, 486.

[5] Von Hammer, Geschichte der Ilchane, II, 184. Quatremère, op. cit., p. xiv.

[6] Ibid., p. xxii.

Plate X



Sultaniya. Ground Plan of Tomb. (C. Texier, Description de l'Armenie, la Perse, et la Mesopotamie [Paris, 1842], Plate LV.)

Plate XI

Sultaniya. Elevation of Tomb. (C. Texier, Description de l'Arménie, la Perse, et la Mesopotamie [Paris, 1842], Plate LVI.)

"at the present time so many great buildings in Sultaniya that except for Tabrīz, the like thereof is seen in no other city."[1] Writing at the time Sultaniya was still resplendent his description must be given special attention. He adds that people of all nations and sects from other provinces came here to settle in the new capital and that the language was a mixture of their various dialects.

Ali-Shāh, high in Öljaitü's favor at this time, was commissioned to be the architect of this mausoleum for so the historian Al Kashani tells us.[2] At this time Ali-Shāh must have had in his mind the erection of the mosque at Tabrīz which bore his name, perhaps it was already under way. Certainly, the experience he had in building at both Sultaniya and Tabrīz was rich and varied for this octagonal tomb and his colossal square mosque show how fertile his imagination and how sumptuous and discriminating his taste in their conception and decoration.

The important position Öljaitü wished Sultaniya to occupy in Persia was of short duration, for at his death in 1316 (716 H.), its decline set in. On the day of his death, Pietro della Valle records that fourteen thousand families left the city.[3] Even though Abu Said, Öljaitü's successor, continued to make Sultaniya his capital and even built his own mausoleum there, the importance of the city diminished as the Mongol power in Persia declined. In 1384 (786 H.), Timur's invaders sacked the city but respected the mosques and tombs.[4] Later, Timur gave Sultaniya to his son Miran Shah as a dependent ruler. Miran Shah's insane desire to destroy buildings after 1396 (798), caused the ruin of many of the finest structures built during Öljaitü's reign.

Travellers from the early fifteenth century have given varying accounts of Sultaniya and the conditions of the buildings at the time they saw them. One of the earliest was Clavijo, the Spaniard who, in 1404 (807 H.), tells that it was "a very populous

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[1]Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 61.

[2]Al Kashani, op. cit., fol. 35.

[3]Pietro della Valle, Viaggi (Brighton, England, 1843), I, p. 743.

[4]A. Olearius, Der Newen Orientalischen Reise (Schleswig, 1647), p. 355.

Plate XII

Sultaniya as It Appeared in 1637 (1047 H.) (A. Olearius, Der Newen Orientalischen Reise, [Schleswig, 1647], Plate CCCLIII)

city, but not so great as Tabrīz."[1] He notes also "a great castle built of stone" which had "many strong towers" and that "the castle walls were adorned with blue tiles which gave an enlaced pattern." Just what this stone castle was we do not know. It could not have been the mausoleum for it was built of brick. Further along, Clavijo tells of Miran Shah

> . . . . standing outside the city in an immense [mosque and] palace of many apartments that was built in past times by a certain great lord whose body was later buried here in a magnificent tomb. Miran Shah now gave orders to have the whole of this edifice demolished and by his orders the body of the founder that lay buried there was forthwith thrown out, lying on the ground to perish dishonoured.[2]

Pietro della Valle, an Italian traveller, reports, in May, 1619 (1029 H.), Sultaniya as "once a very big city but today it is in ruins and not only is it no longer walled in, but few of the houses themselves remain, so that on the great expanse of the city which even now is seen to be a pile of ruins, there are more open and uninhabited spaces than there are places covered with still remaining habitations."[3] He calls the mausoleum

> . . . . a mosque, octangular in shape, with a dome at the top, well formed and in good proportion. At the bottom of the dome, outside on the framework and at each angle, is a tall and heavy column, in all to the number of eight, made of brick like all the rest, ...[4]

The decoration inside the mausoleum, he describes as "adorned with gold and decorated with fine overlaid majolica, wrought in gold and many field flowers; or with writings such as are used throughout the Orient; fascinating adornments always but not durable, as it is plain from this very mosque where already they were beginning to wear away."[5]

Adam Olearius who, as secretary, travelled with a delegation sent by Frederick, Duke of Schleswig-Holstein to Persia, wrote, in 1637 (1047 H.), that Sultaniya

> . . . . makes a great show at a distance, by reason of some sumptuous structures and a great number of steeples and great pillars which dazzle the eye on the outside; but within, it is in a great manner desolate, and when a man comes near it, he finds the walls almost even with the ground. . . . . The noblest building in it is the Metzid or Mosquey where is to

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[1] Clavijo, op. cit., p. 159. [2] Ibid., p. 162.

[3] Pietro della Valle, op. cit., I, 743.

[4] Ibid., p. 743. [5] Ibid., p. 744.

be seen the sepulchre of Mahumad Chudabende. It hath three gates.[1]

Tavernier, in 1665 (1076 H.), writes of Sultaniya as "a half a league from the main road, near to a mountain. At one time there were beautiful mosques here to judge from the remains but now there are only ruins which were fast being obliterated by the elements."[2]

Chardin, in 1671 (1082 H.) says that from a distance Sultaniya looked "very fine and well built, creating a desire for a nearer view, but when one gets there it is quite another matter. There were some public buildings of good architecture and three thousand houses." So as late as this time Sultaniya still was a considerable city and Chardin reports that villagers told him "the ruins for over a half league were of churches, mosques and towers."[3]

John Ogilby, in 1673 (1084 H.), tells us Sultaniya "is much more in length than breadth" due to its situation in the valley between the two Keider mountain ranges. He saw it "at a great distance by reason of its many high houses, spires and turrets but the walls are much decayed and ruinous."

Writing of the buildings, Ogilby reports the "remains of a great part of the walls of a very strong and sumptuous castle which was also the King's palace built of freestone, with many square towers of which some are yet to be seen, but the only structures standing yet in view are two Meschaiches or Mosques wherein Sultan Mahumeth Chodabende lies bury'd, the inscription on whose tomb speaks him the builder of Sultania." In describing the Mausoleum he adds,

> . . . . the roof is very high and rises by degrees towards the middle into a round tower. The walls are overlaid with white and blue glaz'd stones, form'd into several shapes and characters: It hath a gallery or long walk jutting out like a balcony over which are certain repositories where lie several Arabian books, some a quarter of a yard deep and three quarters long; the characters in them are three inches long and every second line neatly written with gold and ink, all transcribed out of the Alcaran.

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[1] The Voyages and Travels of the Ambassador Sent by Frederick, Duke of Holstein to the Great Duke of Moscovy and the King of Persia, trans. John Davies (London, 1669), p. 186.

[2] J. B. Tavernier, Les six voyages en Turquie, en Perse, et aux Indes (Paris, 1679), p. 73.

[3] Chardin, op. cit., II, 376.

After repeating the description of the polished steel grill from Olearius, Ogilby notes "the tower which crowns this structure is eight square and surrounded on the top with a gallery a little above which stand eight little spires like pillars to which there is an ascent by winding stairs."[1]

In 1676 (1087 H.), Sieur Petis, who was a professor of Arabic and interpreter for the French navy, travelled to Persia and included Sultaniya in his itinerary. His description of the mausoleum adds little to what we already know from other travellers but he gives the first statement so far noticed that Abu Said, Öljaitü's son was also buried in this mausoleum and "both tombs are of white marble."[2]

Cornelius Le Bruyn, in 1703 (1115 H.) found "neither gates nor walls" to Sultaniya, "which once was one of the leading cities of Persia before it was destroyed by Tamerland (Timur)." No mention is made at all of the mausoleum. How he could have missed at least commenting upon it is hard to understand.[3]

During the nineteenth century many European travellers visited Sultaniya. Of these later travellers Hommaire de Hell's description is one of the best:

> Inside stairs lead to the tribunes, and in the interior angles are octagonal columns of glazed bricks with an azure ground decorated with entrelacs in pale blue and white. On top of each column is a polyhedral cap similarly decorated. Above the columns is a magnificent frieze with a relief inscription which seems to have been gilt on a blue ground. At the top of the inscription is a small cornice with relief designs. Because the building is octagonal there are no pendentives, the transition from the octagon to the circle being made by motifs at the corners which make a shallow vault at the base of the dome. In the lower part of the dome are four rectangular openings and additional light is obtained from windows, one large and two small, opening from the tribunes. The lower niches are up one step. Most of the vaults are surbased ogees, the curve regular without any apparent swell, though some anticipate the rectilinear form which became general later. All the interior is decorated with glazed bricks which cover parts of the walls, making spots of decoration, for example, on the lower walls set in the ordinary

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[1]John Ogilby, Asia (The First Part being an accurate description of Persia and several provinces thereof) (London, 1673), pp. 21-22.

[2]M. Langles, Extrait du Journal du Sieur Petis Fils (Paris, 1810), p. 139.

[3]Cornelius Le Bruyn, Voyages en Moscovie en Perse et aux Indes Orientales (La Haye, 1732), IV, 44-45.

Plate XIII

Photo--Taylor

Sultaniya--Showing Mausoleum of "Öljaitü.

bricks.[1]

James Morier, Sir Robert Ker-Porter, Pascal Coste, and Jane Dieulafoy have also commented on Sultaniya. Morier adds to the parts already noted that Fath Ali-Shah, in 1809 (1224 H.), built a hunting pavilion here with materials taken from old monuments especially from Öljaitü's mausoleum. Later Nasr ad-din Shah used it as a summer residence but it is now a heap of ruins.

Today the mausoleum stands in the middle of a wretchedly poor village which recalls in no way the splendour of the capital of this powerful Īl-Khān. Approaching Sultaniya, either from Qazvin or Tabrīz, the light blue dome of the mausoleum, gleaming in the sun, can be seen for several miles before other signs of the village around it can be distinguished. It still dominates, as it did in the fourteenth century, this vast fertile plain, so rich for cattle grazing. Its height, six thousand feet, made it agreeable as a summer residence but it lay off the principal trade routes so its importance declined when the official capital, after Abu Said's death in 1335 (736 H.), was moved again to Tabrīz.

Sultaniya was too cold for most of the year, had an inadequate water supply and badly located for its one road lay between Tabrīz and Qazvin, both of which were located on several trade routes of far more importance. All of Öljaitü's efforts to make it a commercial center could not overcome this natural deficiency--its poor location. He could build a city there but he could not make it important commercially for it was situated off the main trade routes.

The only buildings which are seen today which attest to Sultaniya's former glories is the tomb of Mulla Hasan Shirazi, the theologian, built during the Safavid period and near it the ruins of the Madrasa of Chelebi Oghlu, also built after the fourteenth century. The one monument of the Mongol domination which is noticed at once today is the mausoleum of Öljaitü.

The tomb was built of brick, octagonal in shape and sumptuously decorated outside and in. In spite of neglect, earthquakes, and use of part of its material for other buildings, it is still the finest building the Īl-Khāns constructed and among the great architectural accomplishments of all times in Persia.

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[1] Hommaire de Hell, Voyages en Turquie et en Perse (Paris, 1854-60), III, 400.

Plate XIV

Photo--Pope

Mausoleum of Öljaitü--Sultaniya--1935

Other buildings were grouped around it,[1] traces of which on the east wall of the mausoleum can be seen today.

The mausoleum is eighty feet wide inside, with walls twenty-three feet thick, a total of one hundred and twenty-six feet in width. From the ground to the top of the dome, the distance is one hundred and seventy feet.[2] In each of its eight sides is a large doorway. The largest faced the Meidan and served as the principal entrance. It was decorated with plaques of iron.[3] All doors led to a huge domed chamber with two-storied arcades, the upper one being a sort of tribune. There is a gallery below the great stalactite cornice which is a third story but this gallery is on the exterior and does not open into the building. The windows of the interior arcades had iron and steel grills,[4] one of which had a height of thirty and length of fifteen arsh.[5] The north facade is extended on each side of the doorway to form two added trangles from each of which a stairway leads up to this gallery under the stalactite cornice. To the east, a third stairway leads to the platform on which the dome rests.[6] Each stairway was narrow and circular. The height of each step was about a foot.[7]

Upper galleries of this type were not an innovation here but were the result of a development for at least four hundred years. During the Seljuq period these galleries were used in

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[1]Hamd Allah Mustawfi, op. cit., p. 61.

[2]A. Godard, "The Mausoleum of Öljaïtü at Sultaniya," Survey of Persion Art, II, 1114.

[3]Olearius, Der Newen Orientalischen Reise, p. 353. "Es war alles zierlich gebawet, hatte drey Pforten derer hohe die Pforten S. Marci zu Venetien ubertreffen sol aber nicht von Ertzt wie andere schreiben sondern von polirten und damaseirtes Stahl und Eisen."

[4]Three of the steel balls which marked and decorated the intersections of these grills are today in the collection of Mr. Ralph Harari in Cairo. Each ball bears the name of Öljaïtü in Arabic characters.

[5]Jami-at-Tavarīkh, fol. 448. An Arsh is equivalent to a cubit or eighteen inches.

[6]This stairway is not shown on Texier's ground plan. It appears in A. Godard's article on Sultaniya in Survey of Persian Art, Fig. 401, p. 1117, as a result of his recent study of the monument.

[7]Langles, op. cit., p. 139.

Plate XV

BUKHARA. THE MAUSOLEUM OF ISMAIL THE SAMANID

various monuments and continued to be an architectural feature until the Mongol period.

The architecture of the Seljuqs represented a consistent development in plan, form and method of construction through a large number of monuments. Special attention should be given to the square dome chamber, either as a single unit or as part of a complex tomb of a saint and called Imam Zada; could be related to a mosque, a shrine, or a tomb ensemble.

One of the earliest buildings of this type, is the square dome chamber, the Mausoleum of Ismā'il, the Samanid, 849-907 (235-295 H.), near Bukhara, built during the Samanid rule of Khurasan and, therefore, pre-Seljuq. It is the earliest example of the great brick style known at the present time. The exact date of the tomb is uncertain but as Ismail died in 907 (295 H.), it cannot be earlier than the second decade of the tenth century. Unfortunately, there is no inscription on the tomb to give its date.

The tomb is square. Each of the four walls (which incline slightly inwards) is pierced in the center with a door. A dome covers the building. At each corner of the tomb is a pier engaged in the wall, giving the impression of supporting the platform of a gallery which is the upper part of the chamber. The galleries open out with small windows, each side containing ten in an arcade plan.[1]

On the interior, the dome is carried on four squinches. Between each squinch is a large arch. The tripartite pointed arch in each squinch has within it a smaller arch narrower in width, joined to which is a half arch at right angles, resting on the wall at the gallery level to take the thrust at the corners. Thus the weight of the dome is carried at three points. Two small half round bays are between the three ribs.

The upper gallery here is of special interest for it is an early step in the development of this architectural feature, one which, as will be seen, reached its apogee in Öljaitü's mausoleum in Sultaniya. It is known in Achaemenid and Sāsānian

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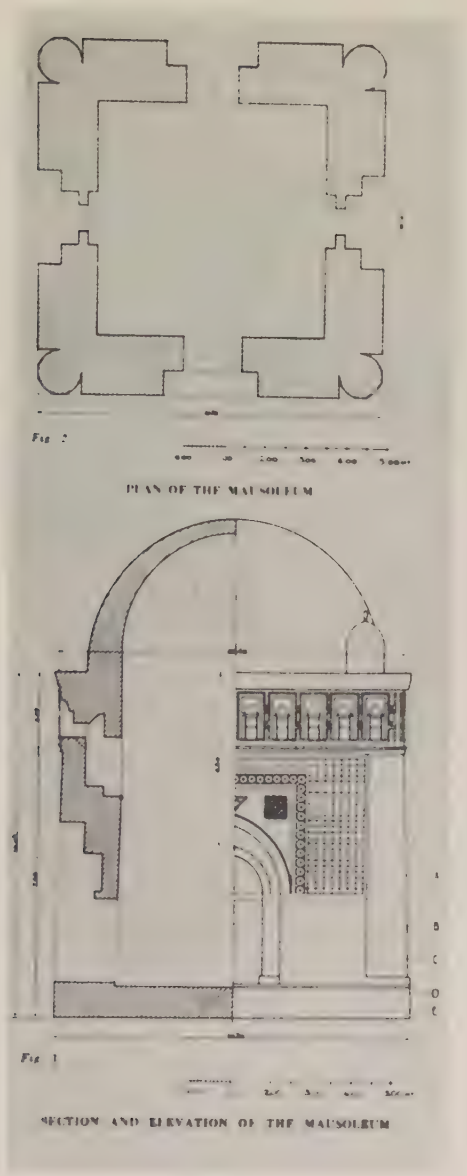
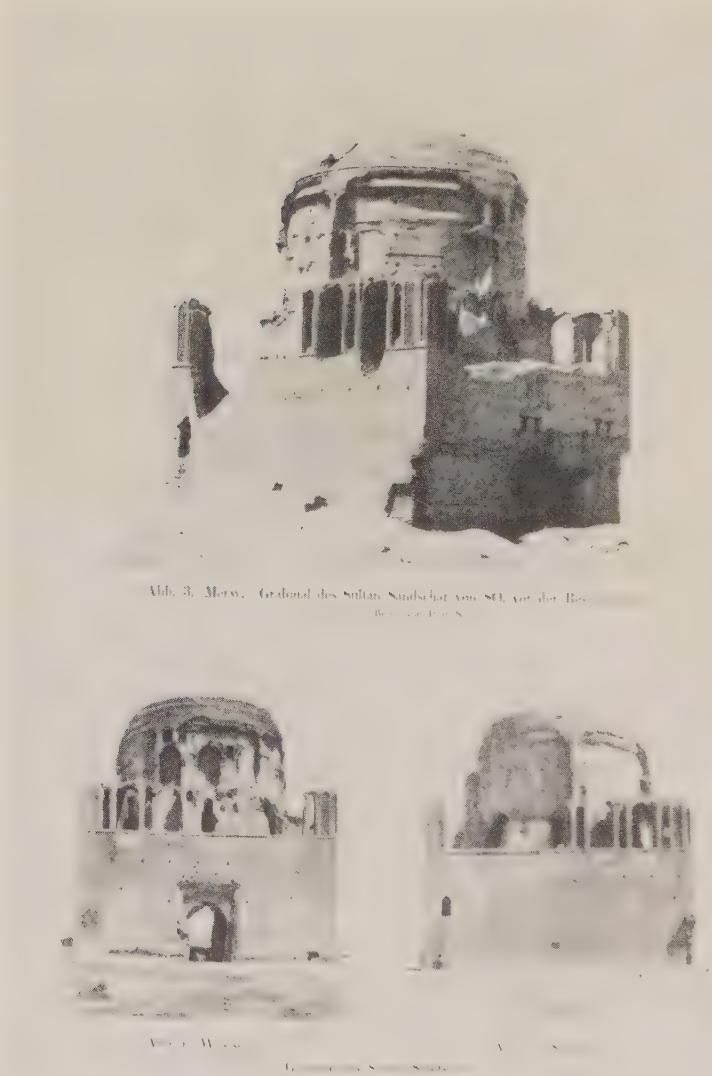
[1]L. Rempel, "The Mausoleum of Ismail, the Samanid," Bulletin of the American Institute for Persian Art and Archaeology, Vol. IV, No. 4 (December, 1936), 198-209. Cohn-Wiener, Turan, pp. 12-14, Plates I-III.

Plate XVI



Budhara. Mausoleum of Isma'il the Samanid

Plate XVII



Merv. Tomb of Sultan Sanjar (E. Cohn-Wiener, Jahrbuch der Asiatischen, Kunst II, 1925. Plate XXCI).

times, when blind corridors were built in fire temples.[1] A silver plate in the Hermitage of the Sāsānian period shows a fortress besieged, and soldiers in the upper part of the building look out from small openings in an arcaded plan.[2] Later in the last centuries B. C., and the first centuries A. D., in Afghanistan and East Turkestan, the Buddhistic monuments have a blind arcade or gallery in which statues were placed.[3] The gallery in Ismail's mausoleum is a continuation of this tradition.

The next important monument with upper galleries is the tomb of Sultan Mu'izz ad-din Abu'l-Harith Sanjar, who reigned 1117-1157 (511-552 H.), at Merv. He was the last ruler of the Seljuqs and held sway over Khurasan from 1096 (490 H.), twenty years before becoming actual ruler. During his long reign of forty years, he kept his province under control, but near his death, lost Merv and was himself held prisoner by the Khwarizm Shahs.[4] He was buried in Merv, in the tomb which still bears his name. As he died in 1157 (552 H.), the date of the mausoleum cannot be earlier than the third quarter of the twelfth century.

The ruins at Merv cover a vast area in which traces of various cities can be seen. Sultan Sanjar favored it for his residence and had many fine buildings erected. Remains of the city walls can still be seen.[5] The Mongols destroyed Merv in the thirteenth century as they laid waste the country on their way to Irān and Baghdād.

The tomb stands near the center of the Seljuq ruins. It is a great square brick structure, eighty-eight and one half feet on each exterior side with massive walls nineteen feet thick. The exterior is quite plain, as high as the base of the gallery, forty-six feet above the ground. On the east is the entrance portal, in the west, a grilled screen, and the other two sides have blind niches. The interior surfaces were covered with

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[1] F. Oelmann, "Persische Tempel," Archäologischer Anzeiger Beiblatt zum Jahrbuch des Archäologischen Institute (Berlin, 1921), III-IV, 274-87. Figs. 1-3.

[2] J. Orbeli and C. Trevor, Orfevrerie Sasanide (Moscou, 1935), Plate XX.

[3] Rempel, "The Mausoleum of Ismael, the Samanid," op. cit., p. 205.

[4] Lane-Poole, op. cit., pp. 151-52.

[5] E. Cohn-Wiener, Die Ruinen der Seldschukenstadt von Merv

Plate XVIII

Photo--Wilber

Tus. Exterior of Tomb

Plate XIX

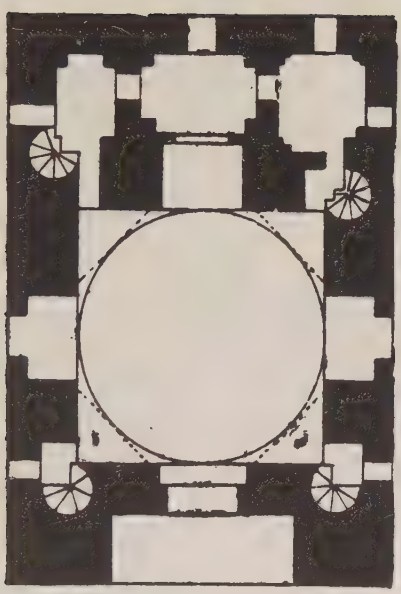

Abb. 25. Plan der Grabkuppel in Ṭûs.

Tus. Ground Plan of Tomb (E. Diez. Churasanische Baudenkmäler [Berlin, 1918], p. 57).

stucco. Traces of an inscription and painted ornament still exist.

The transition from square to dome is made by strongly accentuated open cornered squinch arches above which are stalactite brackets making a sixteen sided figure upon which the dome rests, which Yāqūt tells us was in the thirteenth century covered with blue tiles.[1]

On the exterior of the building is a gallery, sixteen feet high, which conceals the lower part of the octagonal drum. The gallery is the same height as the interior zone of transition. On each of the four sides of the gallery is a wide corner pier, then five large arches, alternating with five narrow ones. On the tunnel vaults of the galleries are areas of stucco ornament. Along the edges of the tunnel vaults are running bands of eight pointed stars, paired circles and elongated ovals, patterns first seen in the stucco decoration at Samarra[2] and later at Nayin.[3]

A winding stair between the walls in the interior leads to the gallery which opens outside, as mentioned above. From this gallery one can look into the interior through the openings of the four corner squinches. The dome rises boldly above this gallery, ninety-eight feet in height.

The increasing height of the dome here is made possible by the development of the gallery construction. Here, the gallery served as buttresses for the thrust of the dome, anticipating the function of the contreforts of Gothic cathedrals.[4] The separation of the squinches from the body of the dome and their independent construction as an intermediary course, as shown in this monument, is the first step in the development of the higher

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und das Mausoleum Sultan Sandschars, Jahrbuch der Asiatischen Kunst (Leipzig, 1925) II, 114; Cohn-Wiener, Turan, pp. 15-16, Plate VII.

[1]Yāqūt, Dictionnaire de la Perse, p. 529.

[2]Ernst Herzfeld, Der Wandschmuck der Bauten von Samarra und seine Ornamentik (Berlin, 1923), Plates LV, LXIII.

[3]S. Flury, Un Monument des premiers siècles de l'Hegira en Perse, Syria (Paris, 1921), II, 230-234, 305-316; also La Mosquée de Nayin, Syria (Paris, 1930), XI, 43-58. A. U. Pope, "A Survey of Persian Ornament," in A Survey of Persian Art, III, 2755-59.

[4]The origin of the buttress in construction is still a highly controversial subject which cannot be gone into here.

Plate XX

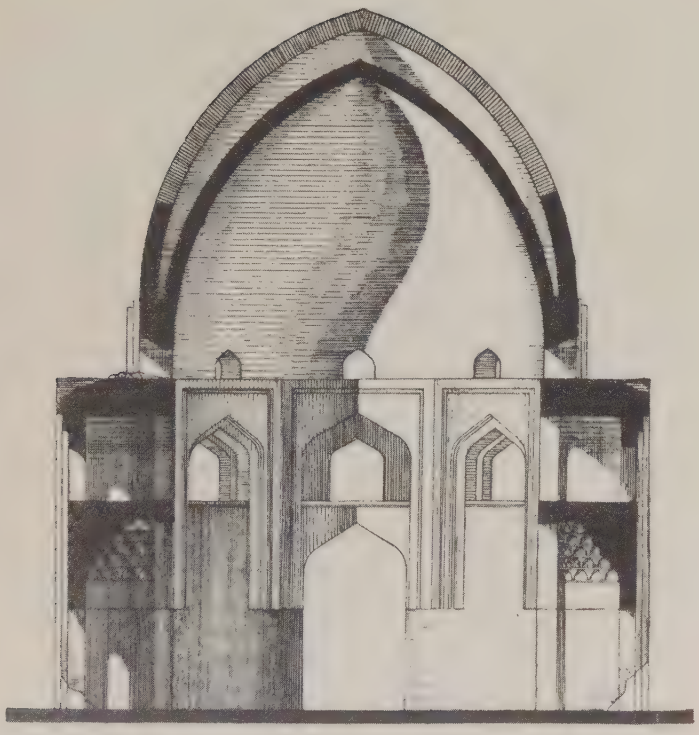

Abb. 26. Schnitt durch den Kuppelbau.
(nach photogr. Aufn. gez. von A. Lampel)

Tus. Elevation of Tomb (E. Diez, Churasanische Baudenkmäler [Berlin, 1918], p. 58).

Plate XXI

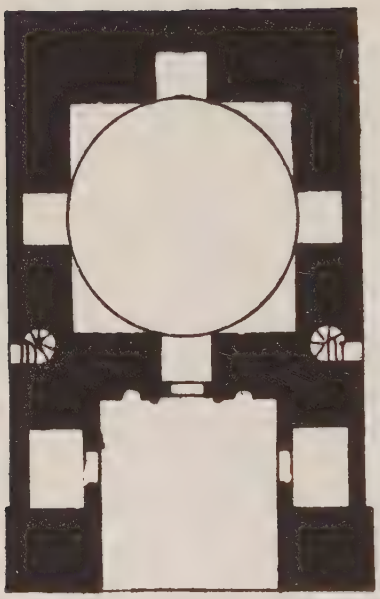

Abb. 27. Grundriß der Grabkuppel in Sarachs. (aufg. v. ON.)

Sarakhs. Ground Plan of Tomb (E. Diez, Churasanische Baudenkmäler [Berlin, 1918], p. 68).

Sarakhs--Mausoleum (E. Diez, Churasanische Baudenkmäler [Berlin, 1918].p. 20).

dome. The next step is the separation of the gallery course from the squinch course, seen in the mausoleums at Tus and Sarakhs.

In the mausoleum at Tus, probably that of the famous Imam, al-Gazalī,[2] there are certain general resemblances to the tomb of Sultan Sanjar, for in both, the squinches are concealed on the exterior by the addition of a second story with a gallery at the corners into which the pierced squinch opens. In both monuments, the drum of the dome is encircled by an arcade of blind niches, which, like the gallery below, conceal the springing of the dome. A rather heavy and squat appearance is the result. Here, at Tus, however, are features different from Sultan Sanjar, as the huge portal framed in wide bands including the full height of the facade, and shallow niches around the drum, in comparison to deeper ones at Sanjar. Here, too, the wall surface is marked off in panels and emphasized by reveals and blind arcading which, later, is seen at Öljaitü's mausoleum at Sultaniya, both in contrast to the simple, undecorated walls at Sanjar. The dome at Tus is relatively high and narrow and is thus related to the one at Sultaniya of a later date.

The mausoleum at Tus is smaller than at Sultaniya and did not have polychrome revetments so far as can be traced today. It is, however, a monument of dignity and importance in its proportions, its solidity emphasized by its vertical lines which is one of the chief characteristics of fourteenth century architectural design. The interior is spacious and well-proportioned, a refinement of the preceeding Seljuq style.

In addition to this mausoleum at Tus, the one at Sarakhs in Khurasan, on the Persia side of the Harīrūd river, should be noted. The zone of transition and its springing here at Sarakhs are features already noticed in the Mausoleum of Sanjar, but its proportions and decorations are in the style of Tus. There are no polychrome revetments here, only well devised and varied brick lays and bonding. The portal is of fine proportions framed by a large torus with wide bands of carved stucco and smooth plaster, a style which was developed in the construction of monumental portals for the next few centuries. There is an inscription which states the mausoleum was built for Shaykh Muhammad ibn Muhammad

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[1] Le Strange, op. cit., p. 389; Defrémery-Sanguinetti, op. cit., III, 77.

Luqman in 1356 (757 H.).[1] This building is smaller than the Mausoleum at Tus but it has the same dignity and fine proportions.

In Northwest Persia at this time there was a highly developed faience industry which supplied the large amount of material needed for decorating large buildings at Tabrīz and Sultaniya. In Khurasan, however, fine brick lays were still used for decoration as they had been for five centuries. Small areas of delicate carved filling which the monuments at Ghazna show, were also used, decoration developed to a high degree two centuries before.

Here, at Sarakhs, the intermediate story with corner squinches is above the gallery story but it is not now important in the interior plan. This tendency to do away with the squinch cornice in favor of the gallery cornice is fully developed at Tus. A new feature appears at Tus in the widening of the four middle niches so that they take up a third of the length of each wall. The corner squinches are made higher and are held to the gallery niches by a single frame common to both. The transition from square to octagon, by means of the corner arches is here already completed in the lower structure which is so gradually turned from the octagon into the circle that almost no horizontal lines appear in the interior to break the vertical movement. This accent on verticality from the horizontal lines of Sultan Sanjar is another of the important innovations of fourteenth century design. Solidity of the walls is reduced to emphasize verticality as was noticed when the gallery was turned around to face outwards in order to connect the interior and the exterior. This was evident as early as Sultan Sanjar. Unfortunately at Tus the upper wall is destroyed so it is not possible to see what step in the development it was.

At Sultaniya, there is an added innovation in making the openings of the gallery equal in width to the eight entrance doors on the ground floor and almost the same height.[2] Two iden-

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[1] E. Diez, Churasanische Baudenkmäler (Berlin, 1918), p.65.

[2] M. Dieulofoy in Revue Generale d'Architecture (Paris, 1883), XL, 97-103, Plate XXIV, has worked out a detailed comparison of the relations of the dimensions of Oljaitü's Mausoleum. Measurements of the monument by Texier, Coste and Godard since that time, however, do not agree with those Dieulofoy used as the basis for his theories. There can be little doubt that there was an established basis for the mathematical relationship of the di-

tical stories in the interior are provided which gives an effect of tremendous space and mass.[1] The eight minarets on its octagonal platform[2] anchor the outward thrust to the walls but do not themselves actually receive the thrusts.[3]

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mensions in Persian buildings. The word for architect in Persia is mahandiz which means also geometrician showing that architecture and mathematics were closely allied. Mr. Eric Schroeder, in his article on Seljuq Architecture, in the "Survey of Persian Art" (Oxford, 1939), II, 1007-1009, has worked out such a relationship in the dome chamber of the Masjid-i-Jami at Isfahan where the chief ratios of the plan are derived from the number three. Arthur Upham Pope, in the same work, II, 1074-75, has suggested such a relationship at the Mausoleum of Tus. Was this mathematical ratio in the dimensions deliberate or the result of daring experiment and careful observation of failures which led to the success of such domes as at Isfahan and at Sultaniya? The question cannot be settled definitely from our present sources of information. That it is true, however, seems likely.

[1]Professor Ernst Diez, Islamische Baukunst in Churasan, (Hagen, 1923), pp. 96-98, has given a very illuminating discussion of the aesthetic results of the gallery development here at Sultaniya where it reached its highest point. By building these galleries on the exterior and in two tiers, one above the other, an architectural innovation is produced as well as relating the proportions between the gallery openings and the doorways below in which a most satisfactory result aesthetically is obtained. The effect on the interior of the mausoleum is equally good, "restful, imposing and majestic." These galleries are inaccessible from inside the mausoleum or from the stairs leading to the roof so are ornamental rather than functional. To emphasize the verticality of the building is their purpose, which is successfully achieved. The pointed arches add to this upward movement. The treatment of the facade has the same purpose--"unhampered movement upwards." From the plain outer walls of the tomb of Sultan Sanjar at Merv to the blind arcades at Tus the developments toward verticality is completed here at Sultaniya. A high pointed dome without a drum adds to the soaring effect as the eye travels upward along the octagonal facade to the eight corner minarets and to the peak of the dome. Furthermore, there is no relationship here between the upward effect produced from the exterior and the purposes for which the interior of the building was intended.

[2]The octagon plan does not appear to be Persian in origin but is probably Indian. It is convenient in that the transition from octagon to dome is easier than from square to dome. The octagon was a favorite form with Hindu builders and sacred writings of the Buddhists commend this plan. (Archaeological Survey of Western India, Report on Antiquities in Bidar and Aurangabad Districts, 1875-1876 (London, 1878), III, 21. Probably India provided the idea and Persia the engineering genius which brought the plan into reality and developed it on a monumental scale.

[3]E. Diez, Die Kunst der Islamischer Völker (Neubabelsberg, 1915), p. 167.

Further development is seen in the seventeenth century at

Opposite the main entrance door of the mausoleum, is a rectangular room with a dome which, after Öljaitü's death, was used as his burial chamber. The tomb was of white marble. A heavy iron grill separated the tomb chamber from the huge octagonal domed chamber. Olearius describes the grill as the thickness of an arm, of damascened polished steel from India, ordered expressly by Öljaitü and which seemed to be made in one piece for no trace of joining could be distinguished.[1]

The reason for the addition of this room used for Öljaitü's tomb chamber is due to a change in plans after the construction of the building had begun. Öljaitü was, at birth, baptized a Christian and named Nicholas. In 1309 (709 H.), when he was converted to Islam, his name was changed to Öljaitü Khudabanda. Then in 1310 (710 H.), he visited the tomb of Ali in Iraq where he had a dream which made him become a Shiite. So thorough was his conversion that he had the Friday prayers in the mosques changed so that the names of Ali and his sons Hassan and Hussain were substituted for those of the first three Caliphs. Even the coins were changed.[2] With his conversion to Shiism, Öljaitü conceived the plan of building a mausoleum at Sultaniya suitable to the position of Ali in the Shiite sect and bringing the remains of Ali from Iraq, thus making Sultaniya a place of pilgrimage for the entire Shiite world. The name of Ali in the stucco decoration of the interior of the tomb, as shown in the accompanying photograph, supports this assumption.[3] The construction of the

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Mashhad, the mausoleum of Khwaja Rabi 1671-1722 (1026-31 H.), and at Qadan-gah, 1680 (1091 H.), near Nishapur, both of which have these exterior upper galleries with large niches. Doubtless, these buildings were the prototypes for the tomb of Humayan at Delhi and the Taj-Mahal at Agra--ideas taken to India by the Moghul Emperor Babar.

[1]A. Olearius, Der Newen Orientalischen Reise, p. 354. "Hinter im obgedachten Tempel wenn man zum Mehrab oder Altar gehen wil ist das Sultan Mahmud Chodabende Grab durch ein schönes Gitter zu sehen. Dieses Gitter wird als ein gross Kunststück gehalten in dem fast Armesdicken von lauter Indianischen Stahl und alle Stücken also an ander hangen dass man keine Fugen sehen kann: ist helle poliret und damasceniret. Sie sagen dass es aus einem Stücke gehauen. Es sol dasselbe neben den Pforten in Indien und zwar 7 Jahr daran gemacht von mehrerwehntem Sulthan aber gesetzt worden seyn."

[2]Howorth, op. cit., III, 559.

[3]Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, V, No. 2 (New York, December, 1937), 113, Fig. 4.

Plate XXIII

Photo--Wilber

Sultaniya. Construction of Dome (Exterior)

mausoleum here at Sultaniya was begun also after Öljaitü's visit to the tomb of Ali. But bringing Ali's remains to Sultaniya did not materialize, so Öljaitü apparently decided to convert the mausoleum for his own and added the room where he was eventually buried. At his death in 1316 (716 H.), Hafiz-i-Abur tells us he was buried in a building with a dome which was inside the fortress of Sultaniya.[1]

Pietro della Valle, describes the tomb chamber as follows:

> In the most conspicuous part of this mosque, where with us the altar of the church is usually placed, one sees here a special room in the form of a spacious chapel to one side of the octagonal tomb itself. Here, opposite the doorway to this chapel and in the center like a large altar, is the tomb of the Sultan, made in the usual manner for persons of such rank of the Mohammedan faith. Its shape is that of our altars, only higher and larger and covered with costly hangings of silk and gold. The entrance to this chapel is closed by an iron grill, all of damascene work, from top to bottom, and richly decorated with silver and gold, in marqueterie fashion --a piece of work suitably and delicately made as it is rich and remarkable in its character.[2]

The dome of the mausoleum has a span of eighty feet. Its steep profile minimized its inherent thrust. As the dome descended it became gradually thinner in a series of steps. These abrupt changes or steps were concealed by thin vertical strip walls over which the large, light blue faience tiles were placed. With its base, twenty-three feet in thickness, on the upper terrace, this pineapple shaped dome absorbs nearly all its thrusts itself. Built of bricks and without buttresses, pinnacles or shoulder of any kind, this dome stands because of its perfect conception and its amazingly constructed profile. It is in reality a simple vault with a thin covering of brickwork which rests directly on the platform below. The light blue of the dome contrasting with the dark blue of the cornice level is a happy choice, for it gives the dome an appearance of floating in the sky.

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[1] Hafiz-i-Abur, op. cit., p. 49.

[2] Pietro della Valle, op. cit., I, 741-44.

VIII. THE DECORATION AT SULTANIYA

The Dome

The glistening light blue dome can be seen at least ten miles away by the visitor approaching Sultaniya--long before the outlines of the mausoleum itself can be distinguished. Its drum was completely covered with turquoise-colored plain enameled tiles, the remaining portions of which today glow with amazing intensity.

Near the base of the dome is a wide inscription band of plaited Kufic, repeating the name Allah and producing in its angled regularity a design of great beauty. This inscription band was formed of light and dark blue faience mosaic, conceived by the artist as a zone of transition from the light blue dome above, to the cobalt blue of the three-tiered stalactite cornice below. This cornice was at the edge of the octagonal platform on which the dome rested. The design of the lowest flat tier was composed of ten pointed stars in white, enclosed by superimposed polygons, flanked on each side with alternating rectangular and wedge-shaped designs, topped with a triangular design in the lower row of stalactite cells. These alternating wedge, rectangular and hour glass designs, all in light and dark blue mosaic faience, filled both rows of stalactites, the upper row projecting over the one below and both over the flat tier below. The dark blue of the background predominated so as to give this color effect to the entire decorative scheme.

The eight minarets on the platform were decorated with Kufic lettering as in the inscription frieze and in the same light and dark blue colorings. The faience here in color and texture resembles that found in the ruins of the mausoleum of Ghāzān Khān near Tabrīz, a contemporary monument.[1]

The Exterior

The exterior of the mausoleum below the rich cornice is

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[1] F. Sarre, op. cit., p. 27.

Plate XXIV

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. Decoration on Dome, Stalactite Cornice and Upper Gallery.

principally of plain brick. The only surface decoration is from the small diamond shaped enameled bricks in dark and light blue, and white, set along the spandrels and down the sides of the three-window openings of the arcaded gallery just below the stalactite cornice. This decoration in color serves as a gradual transition from the brilliant dome and cornice above to the plain brick surface of the walls below.

Two sides of the mausoleum have blind arcades in sets of three on the two stories below the arcaded gallery. These blind arcades are similar in the breadth of the reveals and in the simple, wide mouldings framing the panels, to the exterior walls of the mausoleum at Tus, one of the forerunners of Öljaitü's tomb. These panels enrich with shadow the design of the building, imparting interest and energy to it. Most of all they create a feeling of strong vertical movement. The exterior walls of plain brick produce a solid surface without design which gives a simplicity of outline and a monumental quality to the building that is deeply impressive.

Of the eight entrances, the south portal was probably the principal one. Its exterior spandrels are decorated with faience mosaic in dark and light blue and white in arabesque designs. This is the only doorway with faience mosaic which remains. The exterior of the east portal has stucco decoration, the design of which in richness and delicacy is unusually fine. It appears to have been the invention of a book illuminator and executed by a craftsman in plaster work. The curving cavetto cornice which frames the pointed arch of the doorway has a swiftly flowing Nashki inscription in low relief. The border bands of the spandrels are of repeated three-lobed leaf and arabesque designs with the triangular segments filled with densely swirled arabesques and leaves, all in relief. Over the doorway is a second inscription band, rectangular in shape and enclosed with the same border bands which surround the spandrels. To the left of the doorway are the remains of an inscription band of plaited Kufic with a rich and varied foliated background. The intricate beauty of all the designs of the stucco work here shows how sumptuous the decorative repertoire of the artists who conceived them and how discriminating their innate taste. Only careful examination of the decoration in all its wealth of detail gives an adequate idea of its variety and imaginative splendour. The principal motif is

Plate XXV

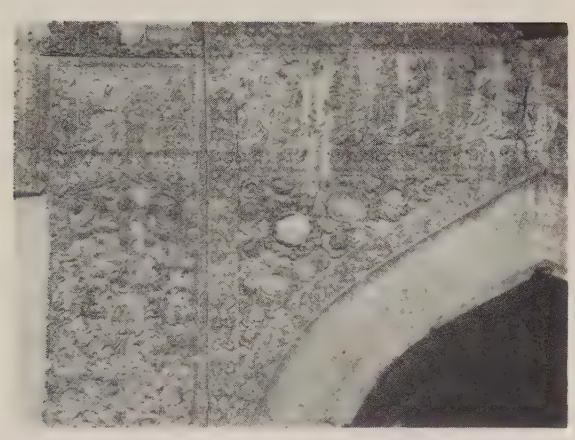

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. Inscription Band and Stucco Decoration over East Portal (Exterior).

Plate XXVI

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. A Doorway with Stalactite Recess Above.

always the arabesque of exquisite design with a daring and nobility not seen up to this time.

The Interior

The architectural design of the interior of the mausoleum is of the simplest and most logical. On each bay of the octagon a rectangular frame surrounds a high arched panel within which is a deep niche at ground level and another lighter reveal higher up. Over the tops of the panel frames are high inscriptions in both Nashki and Kufic script. The dome is fitted on to the octagon by stalactite arcades.

In the lower courses two different types of decoration are shown which have given rise to various theories as to the reason for this superimposed decoration. The high dado, corner parts, portal panels, spandrels and peaks of the half-domes were originally covered with faience mosaic. Part of this faience mosaic is in solid color and the rest in geometrical entrelacs such as decorated the Gundad-i-Kabud at Marāgha[1] and tomb tower of Mu'mina Khatun at Nakhichevan some two centuries before.[2]

These masses of solid color were used in contrast to the huge interior of plain brick. In several places this plain brick was covered with plaster marked out in varied simulated brick bondings with decorative brick end plugs. Along the exposed brick surfaces were small light blue glazed squares placed end to end to outline inscriptions of rectangular Kufic on a huge scale.

Carved stucco and painted plaster may have been used for the decorative effects of other parts.

The original decoration just described can be seen only in parts where the later superimposed white plaster has broken away. The reason for this redecoration is not known. Perhaps it was decided upon when Öljaitü determined to use this tomb for his own resting place after the grandiose idea of bringing the body of Ali from Iraq was abandoned. Öljaitü at about that time too, reverted to the Sunni sect. To use the mausoleum for his own with the decoration intended for the martyr's remains would have been very offensive to the Muslims, so it apparently was decided

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[1] A. Godard, "Notes Complémentaires sur les tombeaux de Maragha," Athar-i-Iran (Haarlem, 1936), I, 139.

[2] Sarre, op. cit., Plate III.

Plate XXVII

Photo--Pope

Mausoleum of Öljaitü, Sultaniya. Painted Decoration and Frieze of one of the Niches.

to cover the original work with the superimposed plaster and polychrome decoration. In this material the renovation could be quickly made, at the most within a year.

The original decoration emphasized the principal axis of the interior which the later superimposed plaster did not. The decoration of the bays on the main axes was constructed on a geometrical framework defined by the turquoise faience, the focal points and interstices filled with carved and punctured stucco. The bays on the diagonals on the other hand had plain bonded bricks with large scale geometrical patterns outlined with turquoise insets. Thus two cross axes were stressed. After the white plaster was added a single axis toward the chapel was emphasized. An elaborate frame around the doorway opposite the chapel also stressed this new axis.

The superimposed decoration of plaster covered all the original brick and faience mosaic from floor to dome. First a dado twenty feet high of octagonal shaped turquoise blue tiles, much of which can still be seen today, ran around the octagonal chamber and its recesses. Above this dado is a wide inscriptional frieze of verses from the Quran in gracefully moving Nashki characters. The entire Quran is said to have been written within the mausoleum. The characters were of stucco carved in relief, painted maroon, set against a foliated design[1] which served as the background. A cavetto moulding of palmettes also in maroon colored stucco set off this inscription frieze from the painted plaster decoration above. These palmettes are similar to those used in Italian brocades and velvets, notably from Venice during the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.[2] These decorative designs must have impressed the Venetian travellers and traders who were in Northwest Persia at this time, with the result they probably took them back to Venice with their other wares.

In the recesses above the cavetto moulding of palmettes, large rosaces in dark blue were painted on the white plaster around the soffits of the arches. These rosaces were lace-like in design with an outer scalloped band of arabesque leaves and the

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[1]Similar designs were used in page borders of Quran illumination of this period. See W. P. Schulz, Die Persischen Miniaturmalerei (Leipzig, 1914), Vol. II, Plates XCV, XCVI, XCVII.

[2]Otto von Falke, Kunstgeschichte der Seidenweberei (Berlin, 1921), Plates CCCLIII, CCCLV, CCCXCIII, CCCCXXI.

Plate XXVIII

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. Rosace in Recess. Inscription Band in Relief Below

Plate XXIX

Photo--Pope

Quran Page with Rosette Decoration Made for Sultan Öljaitü 1313 (713 H.) (Royal Egyptian Library, Cairo).

Plate XXX

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. High Arched Panel of Interior with Recesses. Wooden Grill and Stucco Soffit Panel Shown Above.

Plate XXXI

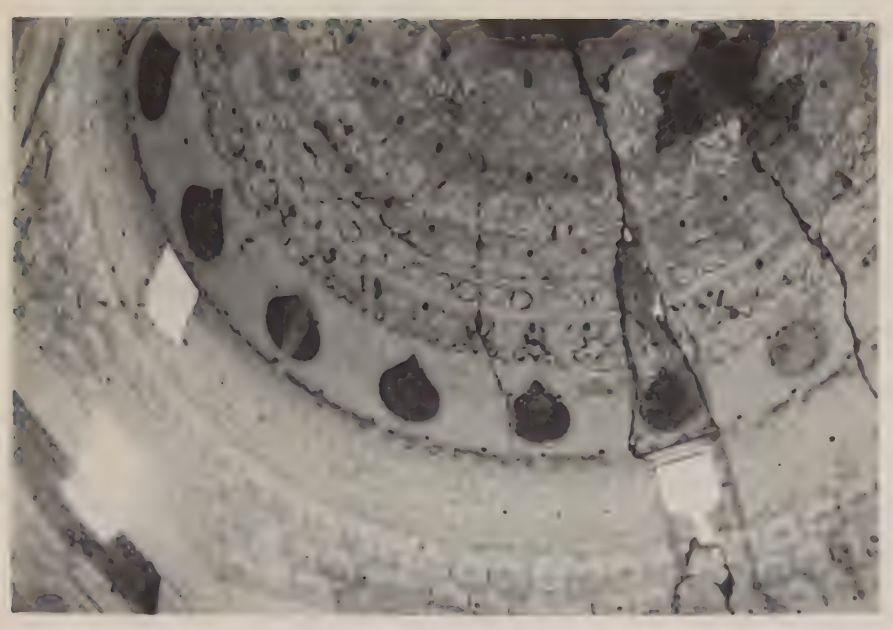

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. Rosace in Dome with Pendant Escutcheons

Plate XXXII

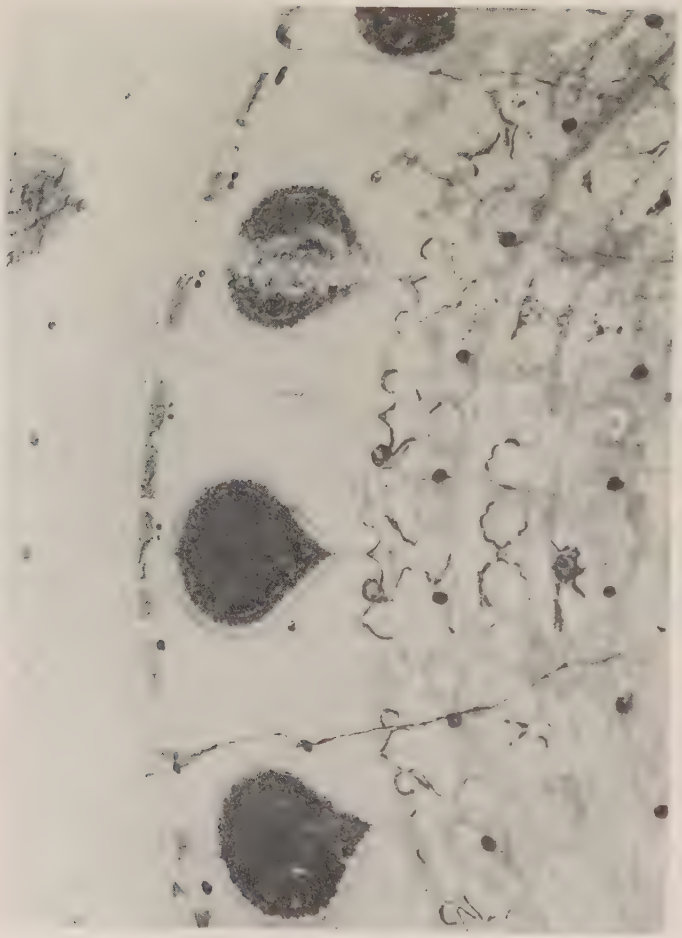

Photo--Pope

Mausoleum of Öljaitü, Sultaniya. Polychrome Decoration of Dome

inner ground completely filled with arabesques in great profusion. They recall the great rose windows of western cathedrals in their lavish and intricate design. Frontispieces of great contemporary Qurans had these large rosaces also.[1] The framing bands for these rosaces are of unusually fine Kufic, the lettering also dark blue in color against the white plaster background. Directly over each recess on the ground floor was another rectangular recess of the gallery story with plaster stalactites on which geometric designs were painted, similar to page decoration in contemporary Qurans.[2]

Across the openings of the gallery were carved wooden grills one of which was still in place in 1935, but has now disappeared. The design was the much-used geometrical motif of superimposed squares and circles which from Seljuq times had been a part of the decorative repertoire of Persia.[3] On the soffits of the pointed arches in the galleries were broad bands of stucco decoration similar in design to the stucco on the exterior of the east portal also the work of illuminators of books and translated here into architectural decoration.

The decoration of the dome was unusually effective in giving the final touch to the feeling of spaciousness and lightness of the interior. The zone of transition from the octagonal walls with its wide Nashki inscription frieze at the top to the round dome with four windows are made by three tiers of shallow stalactite arcades. Each stalactite has an ogival arabesque medallion in relief. All are dark blue and gold against a blue and white arabesque plaster background. Then came a striking inscription band of plaited Kufic--approximately fifteen feet in width. The top of the dome is decorated with a huge rosace--similar but more elaborate in design than those already described in the recesses below. Here it is in relief with dark and light blue, gold and white predominating. From this rosace hang large, ogival medal-

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[1] Section of Quran copied by Abd Allah ibn Muhammad ibn Mahmud al Hamadhani in Hamadan in 1313 (713 H.), for Öljaitü Khudabanda now in Royal Egyptian Library, Cairo. (Photograph.)

[2] Ibid.; Schulz, op. cit., Vol. II, Plates C-CIII; Ahmed Moussa, Zur Geschichte der Islamischen Buchmalerei in Aegypten (Boulaq, 1931), Plate XX.

[3] F. Sarre, Erzeugnisse Islamischer Kleinkunst, Vol. II, Seldschukische Kleinkunst (Leipzig, 1909), Plates IX, XIII, XV.

Plate XXXIII

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. Upper Gallery and Dome

Plate XXXIV

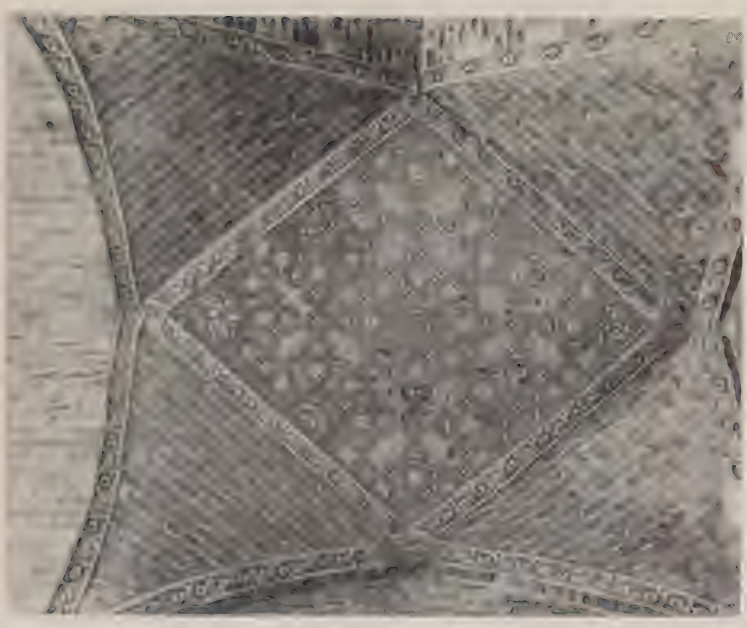

Photo--Pope

Sultaniya. Decoration in Vault of Open Gallery in Painted Stucco

lions or escutcheons also in relief. In these escutcheons are arabesques thickly designed to give the right accent of depth of color to the ensemble. The same arrangement of these escutcheons pendant from the tips of the rosace was used later in the famous Ardabīl carpet.[1] This type of decoration is seen almost precisely the same in the Masjid Vaqt-u-Sa'at of Hazd dated 1324 (725 H.), and in the tomb of Al-Hasan ibn Kay Khusran in Abarquh dated 1318 (718 H.).[2]

The decoration of the interior of the eight open galleries, of the second story seems to have escaped the attention of most of the early travellers due probably to their being inaccessible, for all the stairways leading to them had collapsed.[3] In October, 1937, these galleries were examined showing the gallery walls and vaults still bearing their original decoration in a remarkably fresh condition. The walls and ceilings are covered with a coating of stucco, two to three centimeters thick. On the wall surfaces are incisions which imitate brick bonding, simulated end plugs and decorative brick mortar patterns which have been cut probably while the stucco was still wet. On the vault surfaces the incisions imitate a complicated lay of specially cut terra cotta strips. Finely carved floral ornament in plaster fills all interstices and forms the running borders around large design elements. Some areas have been left white, but red, yellow and green are the colors most used in the decoration of the plaster surfaces.

Each vaulted ceiling of which there are twenty-four has an entirely different basic pattern, the whole forming one of the richest repertoires of Islamic ornament found anywhere. Carved white plaster ornament is surrounded with delicate red and yellow geometrical designs. Medallions, rosettes, stars, escutcheons, lotuses and ornamental Kufic are used in an astonishing variety. Greenish blue is seen in the backgrounds. Even such complex and

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[1] F. Sarre and H. Trenkwald, Alt Orientalische Teppiche (Wien, 1928), II, 18. This carpet is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. It bears the date 1540 (947 H.).

[2] A. Godard, "Abarkuh," Athar-i-Iran, Tome I (Haarlem, 1936), Figs. 44-47.

[3] M. Dieulafoy drew one of the vault patterns. See M. Dieulafoy, "Mausolée de Chah Khoda-Benda," Revue génerale de l'architecture et des travaux publiés, X (Paris, 1883), Plates XXV-XXVI.

Plate XXXV

Photo--Wilber

Sultaniya. Ali's Name in Bay at Junction of Borders

difficult forms as variations of the ten pointed star are introduced. The arches and bays are bordered with carved stucco bands, the designs of which recall those in the Masjid-i-Jami of Varamin. In addition to the floral and geometrical ornament are Arabic characters, the name of Ali appearing in a bay at the junction of these borders,[1] which confirms the assumption that Öljaitü intended to use this mausoleum for the remains of this Muslim saint. On the soffit of two of the arches on the north side the same is repeated in a design which suggests the swastika. All this ornament was not the result of molds but as freely carried out as calligraphy and with the same graceful sweep.

The imitation brick binding with brick end plugs on some of the side walls and the more elaborate patterns on the vaults are imitations of the designs which in the Seljuq period would have been executed in expensively cut brick and specially cut and baked terra cotta pieces. Afterwards, the whole area was painted. So here is a use of Seljuq decorative motifs which have been painted in the period of bright colors of faience mosaic. Thus, the two types of ornament here at Sultaniya seem to merge with the use of pattern types of the earlier Seljuq period. Now color in full blaze arrives. It was anticipated in the tomb at Shanb Ghazan. Here at Sultaniya it reaches its zenith showing that complete control of vigorous polychroming has been attained.

The Mausoleum of Öljaitü at Sultaniya is the finest example of architecture produced during the reign of the Īl-Khāns and one of the most important monuments ever constructed in Persia. It is individual in its form and shows complete harmony between its construction and its decoration. Faience richly ornaments it but its architectural sturdiness and design are its core, well sensed beneath its decorative coating. No photograph can adequately convey its great scale and the overpowering effect it has on the spectator.

In spite of earthquakes, the use of its materials for other buildings and the usual deterioration from time to time and the elements, this tomb is still a most impressive and imposing architectural creation, attesting the ability and capacity of the

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[1] Donald N. Wilber, "Institute's Survey of Persian Architecture," Bulletin of the American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology, V, No. 2 (New York, December, 1937), 113.

Mongols as builders, not only for the fourteenth century but for all time. It will stand for subsequent ages as the epitome of the architectural arts of the Mongol rule in Northwest Persia. "With its general beauty of outline this building affords one of the best specimens of this style to be found either in Persia or in any other country."[1]

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[1]James Ferguson, History of Architecture in All Countries (London, 1893), II, 572.

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X. THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ĪL-KHĀNS

The Īl-Khān Mongols during their hundred years' residence in control of Persia brought to a high point its economic and artistic life. Especially in architecture was their success pronounced. They initiated an era of building activity not only in Northwest Persia where the rulers lived but all over their empire from Baghdād in the west to Herat in the east where most beautiful and remarkable buildings were produced. This burst of energy and accomplishment was due to intelligent, far-sighted and forceful rulers of whom Ghāzān Khān and Öljaitü were the most remarkable and to their vazirs, Rāshīd ad-dīn and Ali Shah. Their architectural achievements were a reflection of their strong and capable personalities.

Ghāzān Khān with his reformed tax system and vastly improved service of governmental officials ordered building all over Persia to be started. The Masjid-i-Mir at Chaqmaq is dated 1300 (699 H.) and the Masjid Abd Allah at Nayir, the same year. The tomb of the saint Pir-i-Bakram was constructed outside Isfahan in 1303 (703 H.), and during 1310 (710 H.), extensive repairs were started at the Masjid-i-Jami at Isfahan. Many other buildings must have been started which today are destroyed or accurate dating of which is impossible.

After Tabrīz had been rebuilt and Sultaniya completed, thousands of artisans must have been released for work in other parts of the country. They were trained and their skill was proved in the magnificent structures that were the pride of their rulers. Now began the wide distribution of these workmen to all parts of the empire. In Herat, city walls were built, mosques repaired, an immense madrasa was constructed and a reception hall with mural paintings erected.[1] At Natanz, one of the most beautiful mosques and madrasas of the period was begun in 1304 (704 H.), and completed in 1324 (725 H.). The Masjid-i-Jami at Varami dates from 1322 (722 H.), and the Masjid Vaqt-y-Saat of

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[1] M. Barbier de Meynard, Extraits de la chronique persane d'Herat (Paris, 1861), pp. 84-107.

Yazd, from 1326 (726 H.).

The highly developed architectural accomplishments of the preceding Seljuq period were drawn upon for the creations of the Mongol period. The changes and modifications often were so gradual that the evolution at times is difficult to trace. The Mausoleum at Tus, which some scholars[1] give a twelfth century dating, follows closely the Mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar at Merv, also twelfth century. The Tus building, though, can hardly be earlier than the fourteenth century, as shown above. The Masjid-i-Jami at Kaj suggests the Mausoleum of Sangbast, yet the building at Kaj is three hundred years later. The tomb tower at Bistam from its contour and simplicity recalls the one at Rayy which is some two hundred years earlier. Thus the balance between the older Seljuq traditions and the innovations of the Mongols is evenly held.

Even in materials the change is not greatly noticeable. Brick, stone and marble are used as before. Wood appears as a binder in brick work. Small bricks are mostly used. In structures the evolution of the dome is most noticeable--the single shell surviving but with the contours higher and more pointed. Piers for support are lighter in size and appearance, and the space between these supports is widened. With higher domes comes increased illumination.

One of the most noticeable innovations of the Mongol period is the increased size of the isolated structures together with greater unity and coherence in their appearance. The Mausoleum of Öljaitü shows well this feature, for here the emphasis is laid upon its great bulk which is so skillfully handled that the building is impressive, not only from its size, but from its well-planned proportions. Originality and individuality were the results most desired here by the architect, Ali-Shah, as they were in the other buildings of the time.

With the feeling of confidence that the solution of the structural problems gave, the Mongol builders were now eager to co-ordinate and harmonize the decoration with the structure. So interest in ceramic decoration increased. The Mausoleum of Öljaitü is the first large building in Persia where color was used on the exterior in great masses. Afterwards, interest in stucco decora-

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[1] E. Diez, Churasasische Baudenkmäler (Berlin, 1918), pp. 59-60.

tion and painted ornament decreased, for faience mosaic and glazed tile were used almost to the exclusion of all other types of exterior decoration as at Natanz.[1] But the balance between structure and its decoration is rigidly adhered to, for the structural core of the monument is always sensed beneath its exterior decoration.

The persistence of old forms is seen in the mosque plans. The columnar type so long in use continues as well as the domed type. In the Mausoleum of Pir-i-Bakran outside Isfahan, the single ivan type is found--also a survival of older forms from Sāsānian times. The four ivan type is the only form in this Mongol period which shows development. As early as Parthian times it was in use, yet it seems never to have been realized as fully as now, especially in the mosques at Natanz, Abarquh and Varamin. In the Masjid-i-Jami at Abarquh the ivans are too deep and the proportions bad. At Natanz the ivans seem too high and rather cut off for a graceful effect. At Varamin, however, this four ivan plan is much better integrated and most skillfully adapted to the courtyard. The effect is very satisfactory.

The dome comes in for its share of development as well. Its apogee was reached in the graceful and distinguished one at the Mausoleum of Öljaitü. Probably the octagon form of the building makes this possible. At Varamin in the Masjid-i-Jami the high octagon is pierced with windows which gives added illumination to the interior and lightens the outer appearance as well. There is a successful attempt now to unite the dome with the building which the Seljuq domes did not fully attain--a more streamlined effect in its flow from the top to its foundation on the ground. The silhouette of the whole building is thereby improved. The weight of the dome appears to be better absorbed and distributed. Proportion, harmony and elegance are thus attained.

In vaulting the domical vault of the Seljuq period continues. More decorative features, however, appear in star and radial motifs, as in the Masjid-i-Jami at Isfahan, and in parquetry-like panels as in the small dome of the Masjid-i-Jami at Ardistan. Granted they serve no mechanical function, these refinements are decorative and as the patterns suggest structural lines and force they are psychologically effective--an important

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[1] A. Godard, "Natanz," Athar-i-Iran, I (1936), 75-104.

consideration.

Minarets of the fourteenth century are different from those of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The latter usually have either square bases as in the Chihil Dukhtaran at Isfahan, or hexagonal as at Gulpaygan. The shafts are thin and very high. Decoration is generally of raised brick patterns in geometrical designs. In the Mongol period the base is usually square or polygonal from which the shaft shoots suddenly upward with less tapering and height than before. Colored decoration now is used, usually glazed brick in two tones of blue against the unglazed brick and in bands or sometimes in a continuous surface. Although these minarets are shorter than their predecessors they have a more solid effect. They are usually in pairs flanking a portal as at Abarquh, at the Nizamiya Mosque.[1]

Mihrabs of the Mongol period show the continuation of the Seljuq tradition in the use of white stucco, carved and pierced into elaborate designs of floral and geometrical motifs. The earliest known to date is at Riza'iya in the Masjid-i-Jami[2] dated 1277 (677 H.). Two short columns support the stilted arch around the outer panel of which is an inscription band. The tympanum has an open work lattice design with pierced hemispherical bases. Two broader inscription bands frame the central rectangular panel of the Mihrab. At Isfahan[3] Sultan Öljaitü had a Mihrab built in 1310 (710 H.), according to the inscription. It is of stucco too and of the same general shape and with the same type of decoration as at Riza'iya, but there is a deeper niche here and the tympanum over this niche is a mass of arabesques, unusually beautiful in its design and delicacy in treatment. Later, mihrabs at Marand[4] dated 1330 (731 H.), and in the Masjid-i-Jami at Abarquh, dated 1337 (738 H.)[5] are of stucco in which the prayer niches are now deeper but the profuse decoration about them has the same general character although there is at this later date

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[1] A. Godard, "Abarquh," Athar-i-Iran, I (1936), Plate LI.

[2] J. Christy-Wilson, "The Masjid-i-Jami of Riaz'iya," Bulletin of American Institute for Iranian Art and Archaeology (June, 1937), p. 41.

[3] A. Godard, Athar-i-Iran, I (1936), p. 237.

[4] F. Sarre, Denkmäler Persischer Baukunst, Plate XVII.

[5] A. Godard, Athar-i-Iran, I (1936), p. 58.

an absence of the fine and skillful craftsmanship as at Isfahan and less interesting designs. A tradition seems now to be dying for the creative artists of the early part of the century are lacking as their formulas are blindly carried on without understanding by less capable workmen.

The fourteenth century began with much building activity in all parts of Persia, especially the northwest. Mosques, tombs, palaces, specially planned towns, and city walls were erected in all important centers. One of the largest and most ambitious buildings ever attempted in Persia was constructed at Sultaniya --Öljaitü's Mausoleum. Its great size, fine proportions, and richly conceived tile and mosaic faience decoration on the exterior, with its glistening light blue dome made it one of the great contributions the Īl Khāns gave to the architectural renaissance of this period. Exterior decoration in color both in tile and faience mosaic was now raised to a new and highly important place.

The Timurid period which followed well into the fifteenth century continued the erection of large buildings with polychrome decoration, but it centers again to the east at Herat and Samarkand where Timur lived and embellished as his capital. Assembling the artistic resources of his far-flung empire, he created on a lavish scale, but with the exception of more elaborate faience revetments, added nothing to the monumental conceptions the Īl-Khāns had already given him as models.

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